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Draft EIR Public Comment Period: August 4 – September 18, 2001

Final EIR Certification: January 10, 2002

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888 Howard Street Hotel Project

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

2000.790E

2001
1/10/02

Draft EIR Publication Date:	August 4, 2001
Draft EIR Public Hearing Date:	September 6, 2001
Draft EIR Public Comment Period:	August 4, 2001 to September 18, 2001
Final EIR Certification Date:	January 10, 2002

*Changes from the text of the Draft EIR are indicated by solid dots (●)
at the beginning of each revised section, paragraph, graphic or table.*



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● CERTIFICATION MOTION

November 14, 2001

File No.: 2000.0790E
888 Howard Street Hotel Project
Assessor's Block 3724, Lot 66.

SAN FRANCISCO
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
MOTION NO. 16323

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE CERTIFICATION OF A FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR A PROPOSED 888 HOWARD STREET
HOTEL**

MOVED, That the San Francisco Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") hereby CERTIFIES the Final Environmental Impact Report identified as case file No. 2000.0790E; 888 Howard Street Hotel Project (hereinafter "Project") based upon the following findings:

1) The City and County of San Francisco, acting through the Planning Department (hereinafter "Department") fulfilled all procedural requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Cal. Pub. Res. Code Section 21000 et seq., hereinafter "CEQA"), the State CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Admin. Code Title 14, Section 15000 et seq., hereinafter "CEQA Guidelines") and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code (hereinafter "Chapter 31").

a. The Department determined that an Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter "EIR") was required and provided public notice of that determination by publication in a newspaper of general circulation on January 20, 2001.

b. On August 4, 2001, the Department published the Draft Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter "DEIR") and provided public notice in a newspaper of general circulation of the availability of the DEIR for public review and comment and of the date and time of the Planning Commission public hearing on the DEIR; this notice was mailed to the Department's list of persons requesting such notice.

c. Notices of availability of the DEIR and of the date and time of the public hearing were posted near the project site by staff on August 6, 2001.

d. On August 3, 2001, copies of the DEIR were mailed or otherwise delivered to a list of persons requesting it, to those noted on the distribution list in the DEIR, to adjacent property owners, and to government agencies, the latter both directly and through the State Clearinghouse.

e. Notice of Completion was filed with the State Secretary of Resources via the State Clearinghouse on August 6, 2001.

- 2) The Commission held a duly advertised public hearing on said Draft Environmental Impact Report on September 6, 2001 at which opportunity for public comment was given, and public comment was received on the DEIR. The period for acceptance of written comments ended on September 18, 2001.
- 3) The Department prepared responses to comments on environmental issues received at the public hearing and in writing during the 45-day public review period for the DEIR, prepared revisions to the text of the DEIR in response to comments received or based on additional information that became available during the public review period, and corrected errors in the DEIR. This material was presented in a "Draft Summary of Comments and Responses," published on November 15, 2001, was distributed to the Commission and to all parties who commented on the DEIR, and was available to others upon request at Department offices.
- 4) A Final Environmental Impact Report has been prepared by the Department, consisting of the Draft Environmental Impact Report, any consultations and comments received during the review process, any additional information that became available including a description of a revised project and the impacts associated with the revised project, and the Summary of Comments and Responses all as required by law.
- 5) Project Environmental Impact Report files have been made available for review by the Commission and the public. These files are available for public review by appointment at the Department offices at 1660 Mission Street, and are part of the record before the Commission.
- 6) On January 10, 2001, the Commission reviewed and considered the Final Environmental Impact Report and hereby does find that the contents of said report and the procedures through which the Final Environmental Impact Report was prepared, publicized and reviewed comply with the provisions of CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code.
- 7) The Planning Commission hereby does find that the Final Environmental Impact Report concerning File No. 2000.0790E: 888 Howard Street Hotel Development Project reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the City and County of San Francisco, is adequate, accurate and objective, and that the Summary of Comments and Responses contains no significant revisions to the Draft Environmental Impact Report, and hereby does CERTIFY THE COMPLETION of said Final Environmental Impact Report in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.
- 8) The Commission, in certifying the completion of said Final Environmental Impact Report, hereby does find that the proposed project described in the Environmental Impact Report and as preferred by the project sponsor would have the following unavoidable significant environmental impact, which could not be mitigated to a level of nonsignificance:

A cumulative, unavoidable, significant environmental impact in that the original proposed project and/or the revised proposed project would contribute considerably to the growth in the cumulative traffic volumes at two intersections, Howard/5th and Harrison/5th.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

File No. 2000.541E: 350 Bush Street
Assessor's Block 3724, Lot 66.
Motion No. 16323
Page Three

I hereby certify that the foregoing Motion was ADOPTED by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of January 10, 2001.

Linda Avery
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Baltimore, Fay, Joe, Lim, and Theoharis

NOES: (none)

ABSENT: Commissioners Chinchilla and Salinas

ADOPTED: January 10, 2002

888 Howard Street Hotel and Residential Project

• Final Environmental Impact Report

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I. SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION

- This document is a Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed removal of an existing parking lot at the northeast corner of Howard and Fifth Streets,¹ and the construction of a 39-story, approximately 400-foot-high building to contain hotel, residential and retail uses.

An application for environmental evaluation for the 888 Howard Street Mixed Use Project (the "Project") was filed on July 31, 2000. On the basis of the Initial Study published on January 20, 2001, the San Francisco Planning Department determined that an EIR is required. (See Appendix A- Initial Study.) This EIR is intended to provide information on the environmental effects concerning the proposed 888 Howard Street Mixed Use Project to allow the San Francisco Planning Commission to make an informed decision on the project.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site is a rectangular lot on the northeast corner of Fifth and Howard Streets in the South of Market area of San Francisco, and currently contains a surface parking lot with landscaping. The site is flat with a slight upward slope to the east. The project site is located in a C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District and a 160-F Height and Bulk District.

The project sponsor, 888 Howard Street Associates, LLC, proposes to construct a 39-story hotel and residential building, about 400 feet tall, with approximately 630,000 square feet and two levels of below-

¹ Although Howard Street runs northeast to southwest, by convention it is described as east-west.

grade parking. The existing parking lot would be removed. The hotel would be a full-service facility with approximately 500 rooms, an approximately 4,000 square-foot restaurant on the ground floor, about 1,000 square feet of retail use, and about 40,200 square feet of meeting and conference space. The fifth floor of the hotel would include a full-service health club and spa, with a 25-yard swimming pool. Above the hotel would be eleven floors of approximately 67 residential condominiums. The restaurant would be on the southwest corner of the building fronting Fifth and Howard Streets with the entrance on Howard Street. The retail space would front onto Fifth Street. Guests would enter the hotel via a porte cochere on Howard Street on the east side of the building, which would also accommodate loading for tourist buses. The proposed project would have about 67 parking spaces for the residential use, and approximately 61 independently accessible parking spaces or 100 valet parking spaces for the hotel. There would be a separate entrance on Fifth Street to the residential parking garage.

Following completion and certification of the Final EIR, the project would require the following approvals:

- Amendments to the San Francisco *General Plan* for the proposed height, bulk, Floor Area Ratio (FAR), and zoning designations of the site.
- The proposed change in the Height and Bulk District is from 160-F to 400-M.
- The proposed zoning change is from the existing C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) zoning designation to C-3-S (SU), Downtown Commercial Support with Special Use Overlay for Hotel and Residential, to allow for a 7.5:1 FAR for hotel uses and no FAR requirement for Residential uses and related subsurface parking for each use. (In the C-3-S zone, the allowable FAR is 5:1, or 7.5:1 with TDRs.).
- Planning Commission conditional use authorization for the hotel use.
- Planning Commission review as a project in a C-3 District under Section 309 of the City Planning Code including exceptions to the setback, rear yard and ground level wind current requirements.
- A Variance for the proposed residential parking.
- Department of Public Works approval for a lot split to create an individual parcel for the project from the existing lot that also includes the adjacent existing office, and the location of any street trees proposed to be planted.
- Planning Department approval of the building permit application.
- Department of Building Inspection approvals of demolition and building permits.

• PROPOSED REVISIONS TO PROJECT

Subsequent to the publication of the Draft EIR, the project sponsor has revised the project to a lower height of 340 feet and eliminated the 67 residential units. The revised proposed project would be a 33-story hotel with approximately 600 rooms and the same amount of restaurant, retail and meeting and conference space as originally proposed (an approximately 4,000 square-foot restaurant on the ground floor, about 1,000 square feet of retail use, and about 40,200 square feet of meeting and conference space). The design of the proposed project would be similar to the original proposal, but 60 feet lower in height.

The revised proposed project would feature one level of parking in the underground parking garage that would accommodate 75 self-parked cars, or approximately 115 valet-parked cars. There would be another basement level that would be used for storage and mechanical space. The loading docks would be moved from the proposed location on the porte cochere and relocated to Fifth Street where the entrance to the residential parking garage was proposed for the original proposed project .

The proposed revised project would seek the same approvals discussed above that pertain to hotel use, except the change in the height limit would be for 340 feet rather than 400 feet. A Variance for residential parking would not longer be sought.

C. MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

This environmental impact report for the 888 Howard Street Mixed Use Project focuses on the issues of visual quality and urban design, shadows, wind, transportation, and air quality. All other potential environmental effects were found to be at a less-than-significant level or to be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor. (Please see the Initial Study, included in this document as Appendix A, for analysis of other environmental issues.) In addition, this environmental impact report discusses land use, zoning, and general plan consistency for informational purposes, although these impacts were found to be less than significant in the Initial Study.

Land Use, Zoning and General Plan Consistency (page 31)

The project site is within a C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District and a 160-F Height and Bulk District. The San Francisco *Planning Code* describes the C-3-S District as a district near the intensive downtown core areas accommodating supporting functions such as wholesaling, printing, building services, secondary office space and parking, as well as containing unique housing resources.

The project site is in the South of Market area, near the western border of the Yerba Buena Center (YBC) Redevelopment Area. The South of Market area east of the site and the YBC Redevelopment Area are occupied by office, commercial and hotel uses, along with museum and performing arts uses, including many recently-constructed and high-rise buildings. Further north of the site is the Financial District with high-rise office buildings up to 400 feet or more in height, many of relatively recent construction. The portion of the South of Market area to the south and west of the site is occupied primarily by two- to five-story buildings dating from the early part of the twentieth century, housing a mix of residential, hotel, retail, office, commercial, and light industrial uses.

• REVISED PROJECT

With the revised project, the residential use would be eliminated and the revised project would include hotel, restaurant, retail, and parking uses which are also permitted by the *Planning Code*.

The revised project is proposed at a height of 340 feet, 60 feet less than the original project, and the same height permitted by the Height and Bulk district the zoning in the adjacent Yerba Buena Gardens and Moscone Convention Center. Therefore, the effects of the revised project would be substantially the same as the proposed project.

Visual Quality and Urban Design (page 38)

The project site is in the southeast corner of the block bounded by Howard, Fifth, Fourth, and Minna Streets. The project vicinity is a mix of residential, office, commercial, retail, hotel, museum, performing arts, and light industrial uses. The area to the east and north of the site is characterized by a higher proportion of more recent buildings, many of them high-rises, including the Yerba Buena Center to the east

and the downtown financial district to the north. In contrast, the area to the south and west of the project site is characterized by older two- to five-story buildings dating from the early part of the twentieth century. There are several high-rise buildings existing or under construction in the project vicinity that are as tall or taller than the proposed project.

The proposed project would be substantially higher than most surrounding buildings and would be visually prominent from many viewpoints, both near and distant. The proposed project's height and configuration would make it readily apparent from nearby locations such as Fifth and Folsom Streets (one block to the south), Market and Fifth Streets (two blocks to the north), and Howard and Fourth Streets (one block to the east). From more distant vantage points to the south, such as Highways 80 and 280 looking north, the proposed project would be readily visible as the highest building in its immediate vicinity, although it would be similar in visual character and height to other high-rise buildings in the existing downtown cityscape. From the distant vantage point of the Bay Bridge looking west, the upper portion of the building would be visible, but the proposed project would be less conspicuous than other structures in the downtown skyline.

The topography of the area surrounding the site is flat, and existing development limits views from streets and sidewalks. While the proposed project would be visible from various locations, possibly including some open spaces, the proposed project would not block any public view corridors. Views from public streets or private properties may be altered by the proposed construction, although this effect would be limited by the fact that the neighborhood is already densely developed.

As a result, it cannot be concluded that the proposed project would have demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area, and thus, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on urban design and visual quality.

● REVISED PROJECT

The building design of the revised proposed project would be similar to the original proposed project only 60 feet lower in height. Thus, the revised proposed project would have a less than significant impact on urban design and visual quality.

Shadows and Wind (page 50)

Existing open space areas in the vicinity of the site include South of Market Park, Howard-Langton Mini-Park, Union Square, Boeddeker Park, Yerba Buena Gardens, and Hallidie Plaza.

City Planning Code Section 295, adopted in 1984 pursuant to voter approval of Proposition K, prohibits the issuance of building permits for structures over 40 feet in height that would shade property under the jurisdiction of, or designated to be acquired by, the Recreation and Park Commission.

Shadow patterns for existing, proposed, and approved buildings in the project area, plus the project, were created for representative times of the day (10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m.) for the four seasons: during winter and summer solstices (December 21 and June 21), when the sun is at its lowest and highest, and during spring and fall equinoxes (March 21 and September 21), when the sun is at its midpoint.

On December 21, new shadow would cover portions of Minna and Mission Streets at 10:00 a.m. and noon, and would shade the north sidewalk of Howard Street between Third and Fifth Streets at 3:00 p.m. The proposed project would not shade any of the six open spaces at 10:00 a.m. and noon, but would cover the southernmost portion of Yerba Buena Gardens, consisting of a narrow strip that extends south to Howard Street from the main body of the Gardens (which would not be shaded at 3:00 p.m.). From the relative shadow patterns at noon and 3:00 p.m., it can be inferred that shadow would pass over Yerba Buena Gardens between these hours, shading a different swath of the Gardens at any one time. The proposed project would not shade any of the other open spaces at 3:00 p.m.

On March 21, new shadow would extend over a portion of Minna Street at 10:00 a.m., and a portion of Howard Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets at 3:00 p.m. On June 21, new shadow would extend over a portion of Fifth Street west of the project site at 10:00 a.m., and over a portion of Howard Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets at 3:00 p.m. For March 21 and June 21, no new shadows on streets or sidewalks would be created at noon, and none of the six open spaces would be shaded at 10:00 a.m., noon, or 3:00 p.m.

On September 21, new shadow would extend over portions of Fifth and Mission Streets at 10:00 a.m., over a portion of Minna Street at noon, and over a portion of the north sidewalk Howard Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets at 3:00 p.m. None of the six open spaces would be shaded at 10:00 a.m., noon, or 3:00 p.m.

Because the proposed project would not shade any open space areas under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department, and would shade portions of Yerba Buena Gardens during limited periods of the year (winter afternoons), the shadow impact of the proposed project would be considered less than significant.

The greatest changes in wind speeds associated with the proposed project would be on the sidewalk at the south side of Howard Street where the wind speed would increase from 11 to 17 miles per hour, and at the southwest corner of the project site at the intersection of Fifth and Howard Streets where wind speeds would shift from 11 to 20 miles per hour. As with existing conditions, the proposed project would not cause exceedances of the 26 mph hazardous wind criterion with the required street trees. With cumulative development, wind would not exceed the 12 mph comfort criterion for pedestrian walking, but would exceed the 7 mph criterion for seating areas along Howard Street. However, with the added canopy and street landscaping along Fifth and Howard Streets, the proposed project's wind effects would be less than significant.

● REVISED PROJECT

Since the shadows cast by the revised proposed project would be shorter than the original proposed project and also would not shade any public open spaces, the shadow impact of the revised proposed project would be considered less than significant.

The wind conditions created by the proposed revision to the project building would be the same or slightly less than the changes in wind speed measured for the original proposed project, and would also be considered less than significant.

Transportation (page 64)

The transportation study performed for the proposed project reviewed conditions at eleven key intersections in the vicinity of the project site. Eight of the study intersections currently operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS D or better), while the intersections of Folsom/Fourth and Brannan/Sixth operate at LOS E, with average delays in excess of 40 seconds, and the intersection of Harrison/Fourth operates at LOS F,

with average delays in excess of 60 seconds. In general, the poor operating conditions at the three intersections that operate at LOS E or F are due to the high volume of traffic destined to and from the regional freeway network (I-80/U.S. 101 eastbound and westbound and I-280 southbound).

The project as proposed is estimated to generate about 557 new weekday P.M. peak hour person-trips. Project-generated traffic would result in minor increases in the average delay per vehicle at the study intersections, and all intersections would continue to operate at the same service levels as under existing conditions, with the exceptions of Mission/Fifth and Howard/Sixth, which would worsen from LOS C to LOS D. At the three study intersections that currently operate at LOS E and F conditions, the proposed project would result in minor changes to the average delay per vehicle. Because the proposed project

would not cause the level of service at any of the intersections to deteriorate to LOS E or F, or to deteriorate from LOS E to LOS F or from LOS D to E or F, implementation of the proposed project would not create any significant impacts on traffic conditions in the study area under the existing plus project conditions.

The proposed project would generate about 244 new transit trips during the weekday P.M. peak hour. These transit trips would use nearby Muni lines and regional transit lines, and may include transfers to other Muni lines or other regional transit lines. The addition of the project-generated riders would not substantially increase the peak hour capacity utilization, or exceed the capacity utilization standards of Muni or the regional transit providers.

The proposed project would supply 100 (attendant) parking spaces for the proposed hotel component and 67 self-park spaces for the proposed residential units. In the C-3 District, the *Planning Code* requires the provision of off-street parking only for dwelling units, for which one space per four units would be required, or 18 total spaces. The proposed project would exceed this requirement. The proposed project would generate a total parking demand of 292 spaces, of which 181 spaces would be related to the hotel, 20 would be related to the retail/restaurant, and 91 would be related to the residential units. Overall, there would be a shortfall of 81 spaces for the hotel, 20 spaces for the retail/restaurant, and 12 spaces for the residential units. The proposed project would eliminate 100 parking spaces that currently exist on the site. The overall parking shortfall for the proposed project would be 213 spaces. There should be sufficient public parking in the nearby vicinity to accommodate the proposed project's parking demand. Neither the loading zone nor the parking demand of the proposed project are anticipated to substantially affect area-wide parking conditions.

The *Planning Code* would require the project to provide three off-street loading spaces, and the three proposed loading docks would fulfill this requirement. The proposed project would generate a demand for about 2.5 loading spaces during an average hour and about 3.0 spaces during the peak hour of loading activities. The three proposed loading docks would meet the anticipated demand.

Within the porte cochere, there would be space for between three and seven passenger vehicles. It is anticipated that there would be a demand for between 3.5 and 11.5 spaces for peak passenger loading/unloading and the temporary storage of vehicles for valet operations.

Project construction is expected to take about 25 months, with staging of most construction equipment and materials occurring within the project site and on the adjacent sidewalks on Fifth and Howard Streets. Throughout the construction period, there would be a flow of construction-related trucks into and out of the site. It is anticipated that the addition of worker-related vehicle or transit trips would not substantially affect the transportation conditions.

Under year 2015 cumulative conditions, ten of the eleven study intersections would operate at LOS E or F during the weekday P.M. peak hour. These poor conditions would be the direct result of the anticipated general growth in traffic volumes in the area. At these intersections, the proposed project would contribute 2.3 percent or less of the total 2015 cumulative traffic volumes. The proposed project would contribute considerably to the growth in cumulative volumes at two intersections – Howard/Fifth (14.7 percent) and Harrison/Fifth (5.5 percent) – which would be considered a significant cumulative impact. The proposed project would contribute 6.1 percent to the cumulative growth at Howard/Fourth, however, since most of the contribution would be to the non-critical direction, the effect would not be considered significant.

● **REVISED PROJECT**

The revised proposed project would generate more person-trips than the original proposed project on a daily basis – 5,102 person-trips as compared to 4,996 person-trips. However, the revised proposed project would generate fewer person-trips than the original proposed project during the weekday PM peak hour – 516 person-trips as compared to 552 person-trips.

During the weekday PM peak hour, the original proposed project and the revised proposed project would generate similar volumes of auto, transit and walk/other person-trips. In addition, both the original proposed project and the revised proposed project would generate 115 vehicle-trips during the weekday PM peak hour. The percentage of inbound and outbound vehicle-trips would be similar for the original proposed project and the revised proposed project.

With the original proposed project, the driveway for the hotel parking garage would be accessed from Howard Street and the driveway for the residential garage would be accessed from Fifth Street. Since the revised proposed project would eliminate the residential uses, the former residential parking spaces would be converted to hotel parking and would be accessed via the hotel garage. The reassignment of some vehicle-trips from Fifth Street to Howard Street would not substantially change the turning movement volumes at the study intersections.

Since the revised proposed project would generate the same number of vehicle-trips as the original proposed project during the weekday PM peak hour, it is anticipated that the Existing plus Project operation conditions at the study intersections would be similar for both the original proposed project and the revised proposed project. The revised proposed project would not create any significant impacts on traffic conditions in the study area under the existing plus project conditions.

The revised proposed project would have a smaller parking demand than the original proposed project – 237 spaces compared to 288 spaces. The revised proposed project would provide fewer parking spaces than the original proposed project – 115 valet parking spaces as compared to 167 parking spaces with the original proposed project. The revised proposed project would have a parking shortfall of 122 spaces (in addition to the 100-space parking lot that would be displaced with construction of either the original proposed project and the revised proposed project). Since the original proposed project would have a parking shortfall of 113 spaces, the revised proposed project would have a similar effect on area-wide parking conditions as the original proposed project and it would not be considered to be a significant impact.

The revised proposed project would generate an additional four service/delivery vehicles than the original proposed project– 57 trips as compared to 53 trips. The revised proposed project, however, would continue to have a demand for three loading docks during both the average and peak hours of loading activity. As such, the proposed loading dock supply of three spaces for the revised proposed project would meet demand.

Since the revised proposed project would contribute the same amount of traffic to the cumulative volume as the proposed project, it would also have a significant cumulative impact at the Howard/Fifth and Harrison/Fifth intersections. The proposed revised project would contribute 6.1 percent to the cumulative growth at Howard/Fourth, however, since most of the contribution would be to the non-critical direction, the effect would not be considered significant.

Air Quality (page 89)

Air quality impacts would result from project construction and operation. Construction emissions, primarily dust generated by earthmoving activities and criteria air pollutants emitted by construction vehicles, would have a short-term effect on air quality. Operational emissions, generated by project-related traffic and by combustion of natural gas for building space and water heating, would continue to affect air quality throughout the lifetime of the project. Transportation sources, such as project-generated vehicles, would account for over 90 percent of operational project-related emissions. Stationary source emissions would be less than significant.

Project-generated increases in regional emissions from auto travel of reactive hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen (two precursors of ozone), and PM_{10} (particulate matter, 10 micron) could affect regional air

quality outside the project vicinity. Project-related emissions would be below the applicable thresholds, so project impacts on regional air emissions would be less than significant.

Predicted one-hour and eight-hour averaged carbon monoxide concentrations with project-generated traffic at the eight nearby intersections that meet the Bay Area Air Quality Management District criteria for modeling would be below the applicable state/federal standards and hence, a less-than-significant impact.

Growth Inducement (page 94)

The proposed replacement of an existing surface parking lot with a mixed use building containing hotel, residential, and retail uses would intensify the use of the site, but would not be expected to substantially alter development patterns in the South of Market area or elsewhere in San Francisco. The additional 1,271 daily population (consisting of employees, hotel guests, and residents) would not be large in relation to San Francisco's population, and would not represent a substantial population growth or concentration in the neighborhood, City, or region. The proposed project is located in an urban area and would not necessitate or induce the extension of municipal infrastructure, and there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed project would result in additional development in the project site vicinity that would not otherwise occur.

D. MITIGATION MEASURES (page 96)

Measures That Could Be Implemented by Public Agencies

A. TRANSPORTATION

The project sponsor has agreed to make a \$50,000 contribution to the Department of Parking and Traffic's Integrated Transportation Management System (ITMS) program. The new San Francisco ITMS program is a City-wide real-time electronic transportation management system that will install various Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) infrastructure components to improve traffic circulation within the City. The South of Market area would be the first phase of the system that would be implemented. This program will monitor and manage traffic by receiving real-time information at the Traffic Management Center via closed circuit TV cameras.

The implementation of the ITMS program will improve overall traffic conditions and reduce traffic congestion in the City. Although the implementation of ITMS may not directly mitigate the significant impacts of the proposed project under cumulative conditions, this program would result in overall traffic improvements and lessening of congestion, and would facilitate circulation in the South of Market area, where the proposed project is located.

Measures Proposed as Part of the Project

B. CONSTRUCTION AIR QUALITY

The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to spray the project site with water during excavation, grading, and site preparation activities; spray unpaved construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other such material; cover trucks hauling debris, soils, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during these periods at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

The project sponsor shall require the project contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as prohibiting idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementing specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

C. HAZARDS

1. Underground Storage Tanks

The project sponsor shall conduct an Underground Storage Tank (UST) scan by magnetometer to determine if abandoned USTs or piping exist on the site. If any are found, they shall be removed in accordance with regulatory requirements, and surrounding soils shall be tested. Any soil found to be contaminated at or above potentially hazardous levels shall be handled and disposed in accordance with Mitigation Measure C2, below.

2. Contaminated Soil

Step 1: Preparation of Site Mitigation Plan

If, based on the results of the soil tests conducted, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the DPH shall determine if preparation of a Site Mitigation Plan (SMP) is warranted. If such a plan is requested by the DPH, the SMP shall include a discussion of the level of contamination of soils on the project site and mitigation measures for managing contaminated soils on the site, including, but not limited to: 1) the

alternatives for managing contaminated soils on the site (e.g., encapsulation, partial or complete removal, treatment, recycling for reuse, or a combination); 2) the preferred alternative for managing contaminated soils on the site and a brief justification; and 3) the specific practices to be used to handle, haul, and dispose of contaminated soils on the site. The SMP shall be submitted to the DPH for review and approval. A copy of the SMP shall be submitted to the Planning Department to become part of the case file.

Step 2: Handling, Hauling, and Disposal of Contaminated Soils

(a) specific work practices: If based on the results of the soil tests conducted, DPH determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the construction contractor shall be alert for the presence of such soils during excavation and other construction activities on the site (detected through soil odor, color, and texture and results of on-site soil testing), and shall be prepared to handle, profile (i.e., characterize), and dispose of such soils appropriately (i.e., as dictated by local, state, and federal regulations, including OSHA lead-safe work practices) when such soils are encountered on the site.

(b) dust suppression: Soils exposed during excavation for site preparation and project construction activities shall be kept moist throughout the time they are exposed, both during and after work hours.

(c) surface water runoff control: Where soils are stockpiled, visqueen shall be used to create an impermeable liner, both beneath and on top of the soils, with a berm to contain any potential surface water runoff from the soil stockpiles during inclement weather.

(d) soils replacement: If necessary, clean fill or other suitable material(s) shall be used to bring portions of the project site, where contaminated soils have been excavated and removed, up to construction grade.

(e) hauling and disposal: Contaminated soils shall be hauled off the project site by waste hauling trucks appropriately certified with the State of California and adequately covered to prevent dispersion of the soils during transit, and shall be disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste disposal facility registered with the State of California.

Step 3: Preparation of Closure/Certification Report

After excavation and foundation construction activities are completed, the project sponsor shall prepare and submit a closure/certification report to DPH for review and approval. The closure/certification report shall include the mitigation measures in the SMP for handling and removing contaminated soils from the project site, whether the construction contractor modified any of these mitigation measures, and how and why the construction contractor modified those mitigation measures.

D. CULTURAL RESOURCES

The project sponsor shall retain the services of an archaeologist. During removal of structures, paving, and any buried foundation materials found on the site, the archaeologist shall carry out a pre-excavation testing program to better determine the probability of finding archaeological remains on the site. The testing program shall consist of a series of mechanical, exploratory borings or trenches and/or other testing methods determined to be appropriate by the archaeologist.

If, after testing, the archaeologist determines that no further investigations or precautions are necessary to safeguard potentially significant archaeological resources, the archaeologist shall submit a written report to the Environmental Review Officer (ERO), with a copy to the project sponsor. If the archaeologist determines that further investigations or precautions are necessary, he/she shall consult with the ERO, and they shall jointly determine what additional procedures are necessary to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources.

These additional mitigation measures shall be implemented by the project sponsor and might include a program of on-site monitoring of all pile driving and any site excavation that may be necessary, during which the archaeologist shall record observations in a permanent log. Whether or not there are archaeological finds of significance, the archaeologist shall prepare a written report on the monitoring program that shall be submitted first and directly to the ERO, with a copy to the project sponsor. During the monitoring program, the project sponsor shall designate one individual on site as her/his representative. This representative shall have the authority to suspend work at the site to give the archaeologist time to investigate and evaluate archaeological resources should they be encountered.

Should evidence of cultural resources of potential significance be found during the monitoring program, the archaeologist shall immediately notify the ERO, and the project sponsor shall halt any activities which the archaeologist and the ERO jointly determine could damage such cultural resources. Ground disturbing activities which might damage cultural resources would be suspected for a total maximum of four weeks over the course of construction.

After notifying the ERO, the archaeologist shall prepare a written report to be submitted first and directly to the ERO, with a copy to the project sponsor, which shall contain an assessment of the potential significance of the archaeological finds and recommendations for what measures should be implemented to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources. Based on this report, the ERO shall recommend specific additional mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor. These additional mitigation measures might include a site security program, additional on-site investigations by the archaeologist, and/or documentation, preservation, and recovery of archival material.

Finally, the archaeologist shall prepare a report documenting the archaeological resources that were discovered, an evaluation as to their significance, and a description as to how any archaeological testing, exploration, and/or recovery program was conducted.

Copies of all draft reports prepared according to this mitigation measure shall be sent first and directly to the ERO for review. Following approval by the ERO, copies of the final report shall be sent to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey, Northwest Information Center. Three copies of the final report shall

be submitted to the Office of Major Environmental Analysis, accompanied by copies of the transmittals documenting distribution to the Present of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey, Northwest Information Center.

E. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT (page 102)

Alternative A: No Project

This alternative would entail no change to the site, which would remain in its existing condition. The No Project Alternative would not have any of the impacts of the proposed project, including the contribution to the cumulative growth of traffic at the intersections of Howard/Fourth, Mission/Fourth, and Howard/Fifth, which would be a significant impact of the proposed project. This alternative would not meet the project sponsor's objectives of developing market rate condominiums and a first class hotel accessible to the retail and commercial center of the City, the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area, and the Moscone Convention Center.

Alternatives B-1 and B-2: Code-Compliant Alternative - Mixed-Use and Hotel-Only

These alternatives would entail a 160-foot-high, 16-story hotel project that complies with existing zoning, height, bulk, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) restrictions. Alternative B-1 would be mixed-use while Alternative B-2 would be hotel-only. The alternatives would involve a lower of intensity of hotel uses than the proposed project, and would have no residential uses. Due to the smaller building size and lower intensity of use, the Code-Compliant Alternatives would have fewer environmental effects on visual quality and urban design, transportation and parking, population, shadows, construction noise, air quality, wind, utilities and public services, and energy/natural resources. These alternatives would have similar effects on land use, operation noise, biology, geology/topography, water, hazards, and cultural resources. The Code-Compliant Alternative B-1 would contribute approximately seven percent to the growth in cumulative volume at the intersection of Howard/Fifth, which would be considered a significant impact. In comparison, the proposed project would contribute more than six percent of the growth in cumulative volumes at three intersections. This alternative would partially satisfy the project sponsor's objectives by providing a smaller hotel, but would not provide any housing. A variant of this alternative (Alternative

B-2) would omit restaurant and retail uses and would contribute less than five percent to the growth in cumulative volumes at the Howard/Fifth intersection. There would be no potentially significant impacts, and this alternative variant would be environmentally superior.

F. AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

This environmental impact report focuses on the issues of visual quality and urban design, shadows, wind, transportation, and air quality. All other potential environmental effects were found to be at a less-than-significant level or to be mitigated to a level of less-than-significance with mitigation measures agreed to by the project sponsor. Please see the Initial Study, included in this document as Appendix A, for analysis of issues other than land use, visual quality and urban design, shadows, wind, transportation, air quality, and growth inducement.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project sponsor, 888 Howard Street Associates, LLC, proposes to construct a 39-story hotel and residential building of approximately 630,000 sq. ft. with two levels of below-grade parking at the corner of Fifth and Howard Streets. The hotel portion of the proposed project would contain about 500 rooms along with ancillary support uses such as meeting rooms, restaurants, and retail space. Above the hotel there would be 60 to 70 residential condominiums.

A. PROJECT SPONSOR'S OBJECTIVES

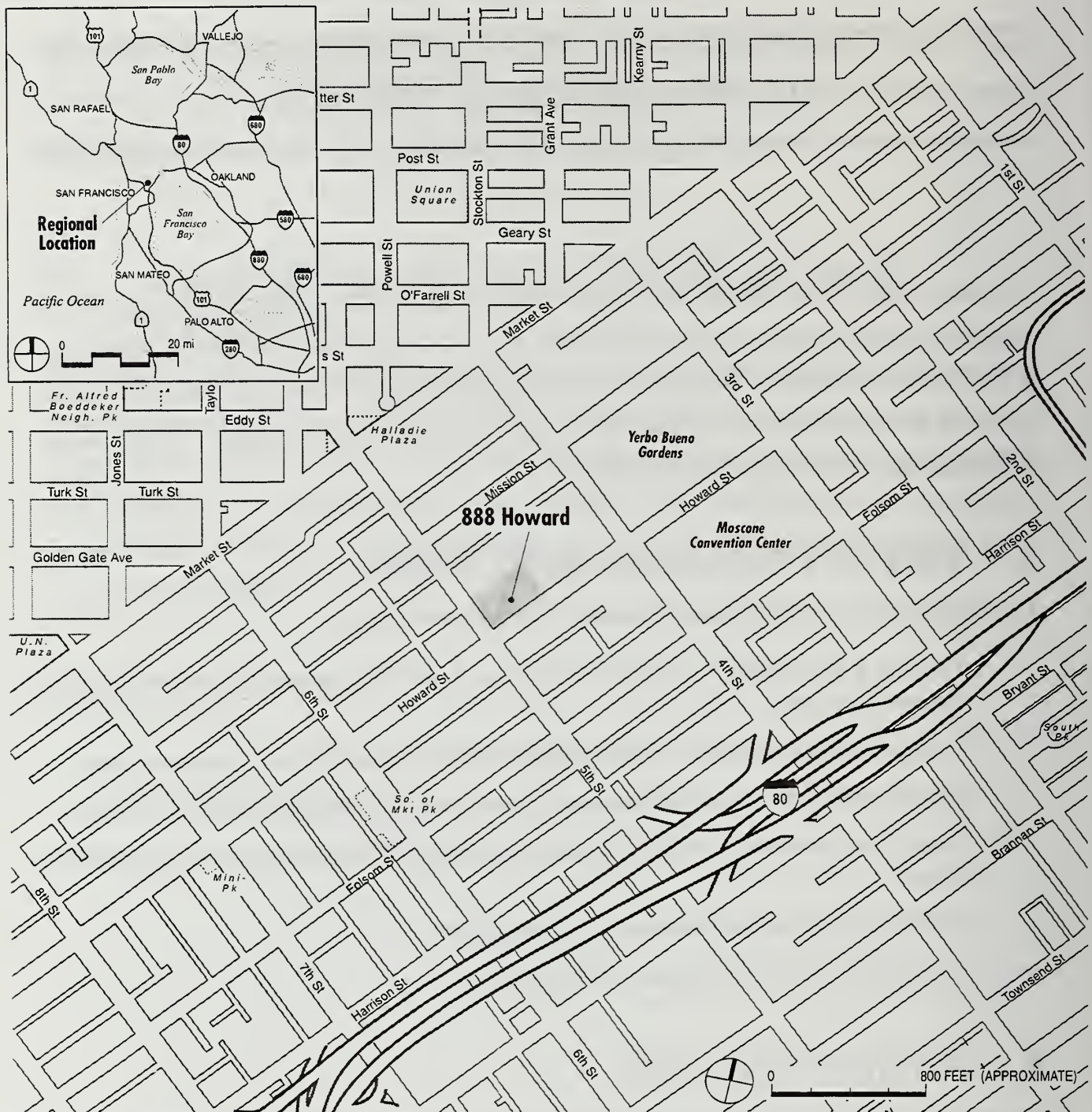
The project sponsor has the following objectives for the proposed project:

- Develop a high-quality, first class hotel to serve the Yerba Buena Area and the Moscone Convention Center
- Provide meeting room space and other facilities to serve the needs of the Convention Center
- Provide market rate condominiums accessible to the retail and commercial center of the City
- Design a structure that is unique and complementary to the Yerba Buena and South of Market Area
- Develop an underutilized site occupied by a parking lot
- Complete the project on schedule and within budget

B. PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is on the northeast corner of Fifth and Howard Streets in the South of Market area of San Francisco (Figure 1, Project Location, page 16).¹ The 37,860-square-foot site currently contains a surface

¹ Although Howard Street runs northeast to southwest, it is convention in San Francisco for it to be described as east-west.



Source: During Associates

PROJECT LOCATION FIGURE 1

parking lot with landscaping used by the employees of the adjacent Wells Fargo Data Center. The project site consists of the southern portion of Lot 66 in Assessor's Block 3724.² The site is rectangular shaped, approximately 275 feet long on the Howard Street frontage and north side, and about 137.7 feet long on the 5th Street and east property lines. The site is flat with a slight elevation change of two feet sloping up to the east.

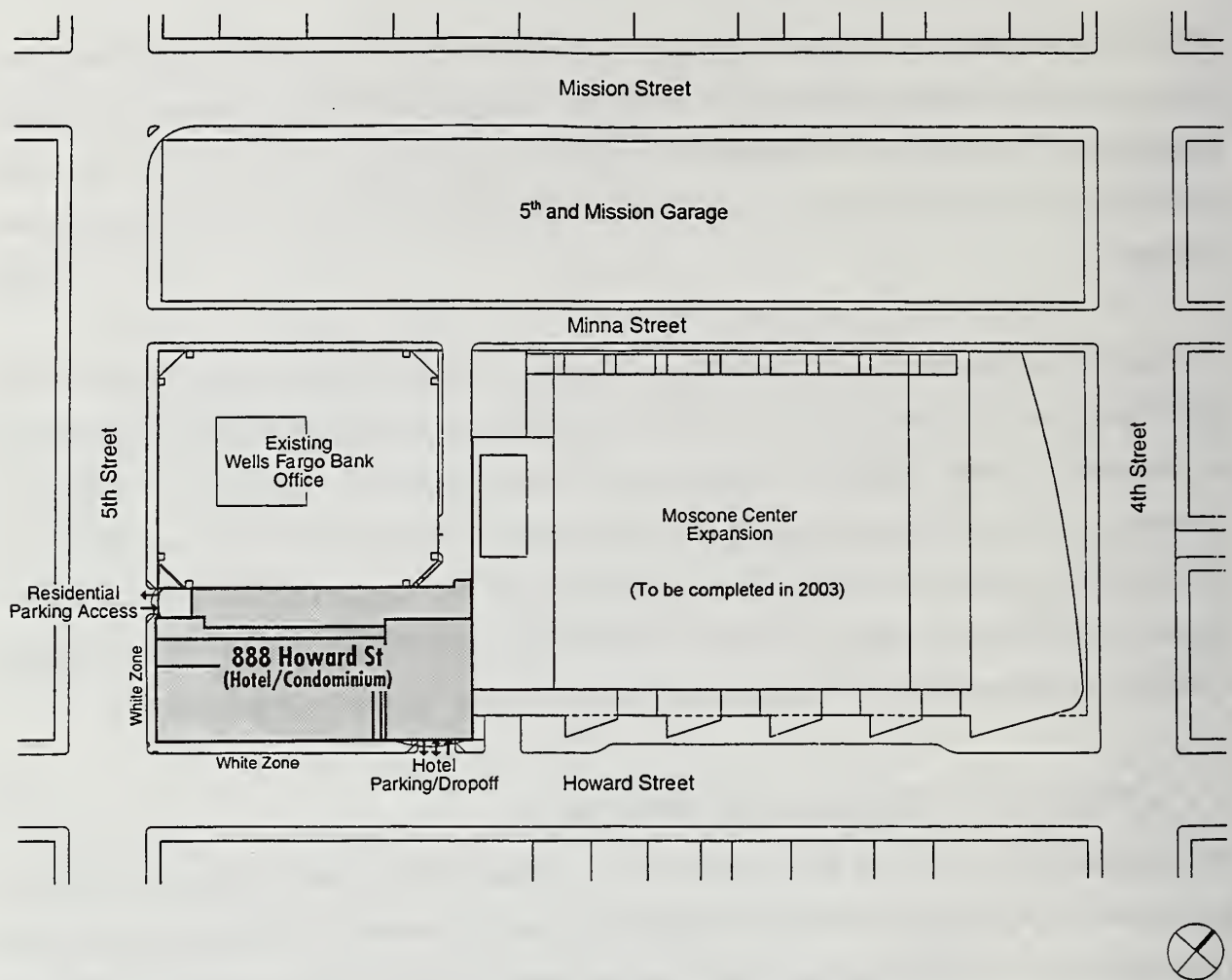
The project site is located in a C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District in San Francisco and a 160-F Height and Bulk District. The C-3-S District accommodates important supporting functions such as wholesaling, printing, building services, secondary office space and parking near the intensive downtown core areas. It also contains unique housing resources. In its eastern portion, the district also serves in part as an expansion area for offices, at a lesser intensity than in the Downtown Office District. At the time the district was created, it was identified as having been for the most part been underdeveloped in the past, with opportunities for major developments of new uses covering substantial areas.

C. PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed project would be the construction of a 39-story building, about 400 feet tall, with an approximate 630,000-square-foot hotel and residential building with two levels of below-grade parking. The proposed project calls for the excavation of approximately 39,275 cubic yards of soil to a depth of about 28 feet. The proposed two-level parking garage would accommodate approximately 61 independently accessible parking spaces or 100 valet parked spaces for the hotel in addition to about 67 spaces for the residential use.

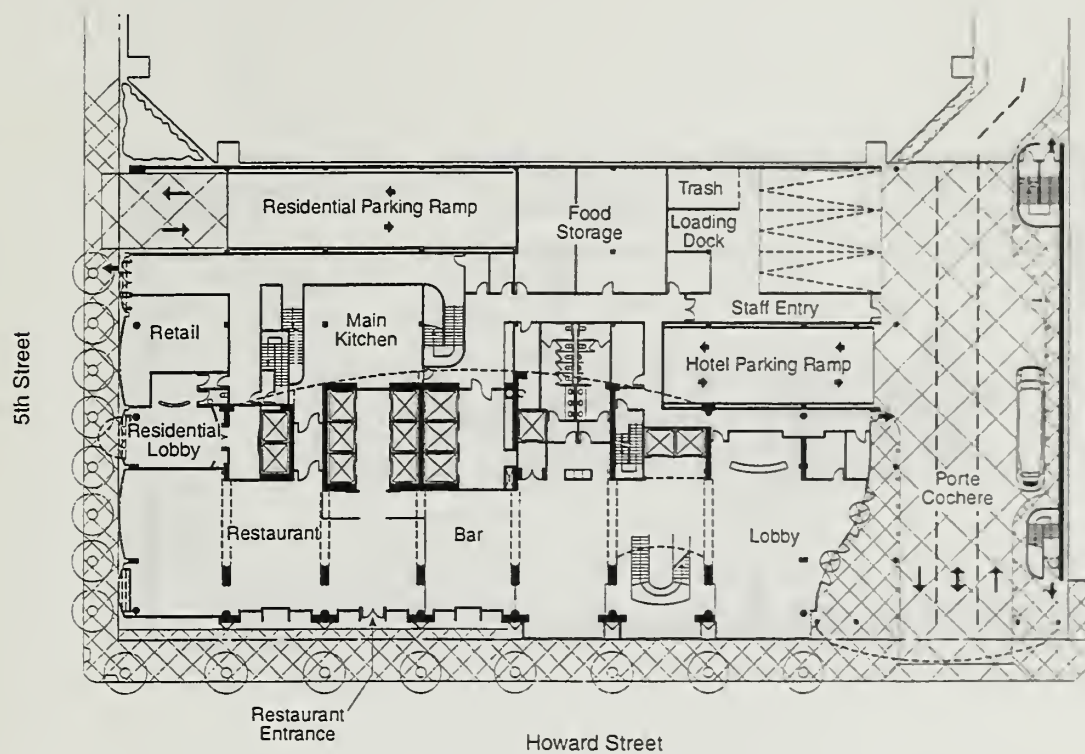
The hotel would be a full-service facility with approximately 500 rooms, and an approximately 4,000 square-foot restaurant on the ground floor, about 1,000 square feet of retail use, and about 40,200 sq.ft. of meeting and conference space (Figures 2 to 10, pages 18 to 26). The hotel would be specifically designed and operated to complement the Moscone Expansion III Project (Moscone West) currently under construction and due to open in 2003. The meeting spaces would include a main ballroom of

² Lot 66 also contains 63,418 sq.ft. which is occupied by the seven-story 337,407 sq.-ft. Wells Fargo Data Center and a two-story 7,307 sq.-ft. mechanical building



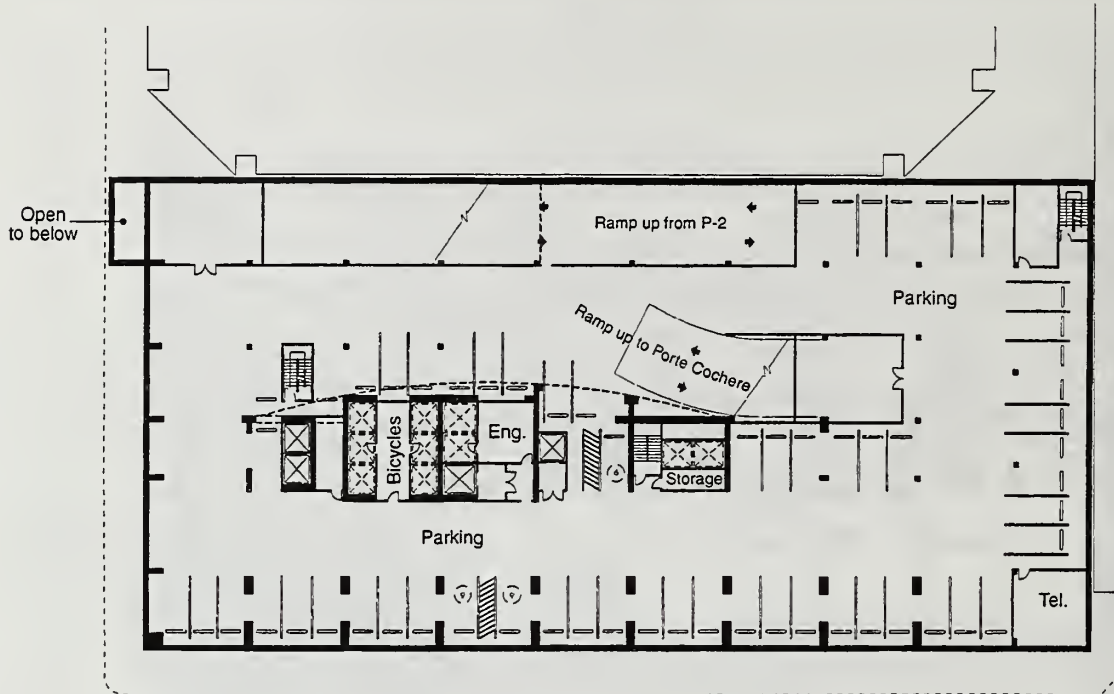
Source: Patri Merker Architects

SITE PLAN FIGURE 2



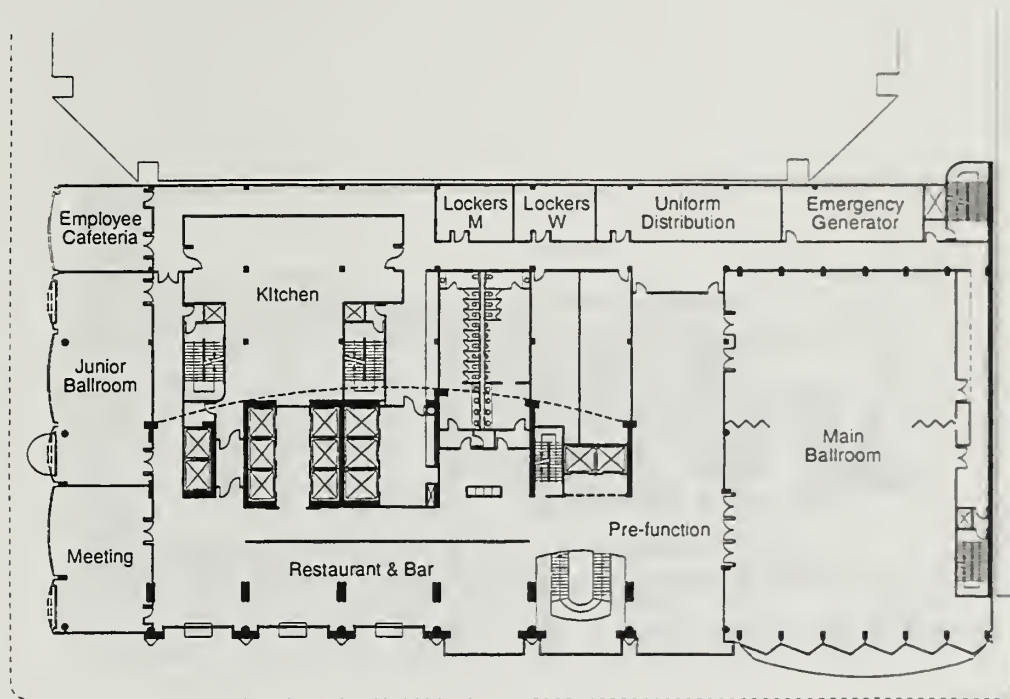
Source: Patri Merker Architects

GROUND FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 3



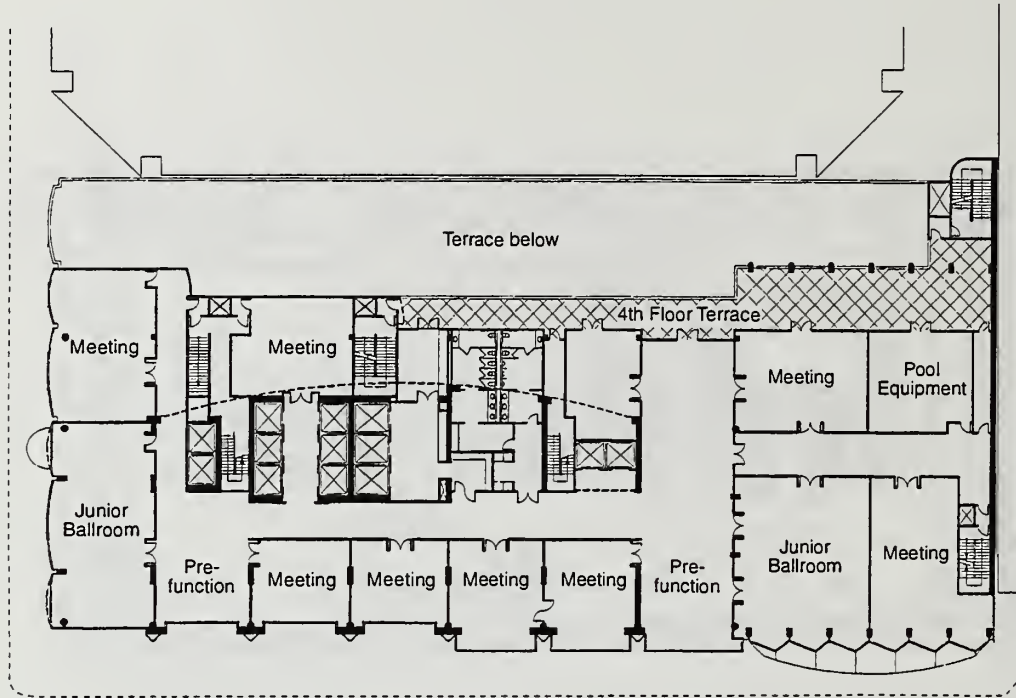
Source: Patri Merker Architects

LEVEL P-1 PARKING PLAN **FIGURE 4**



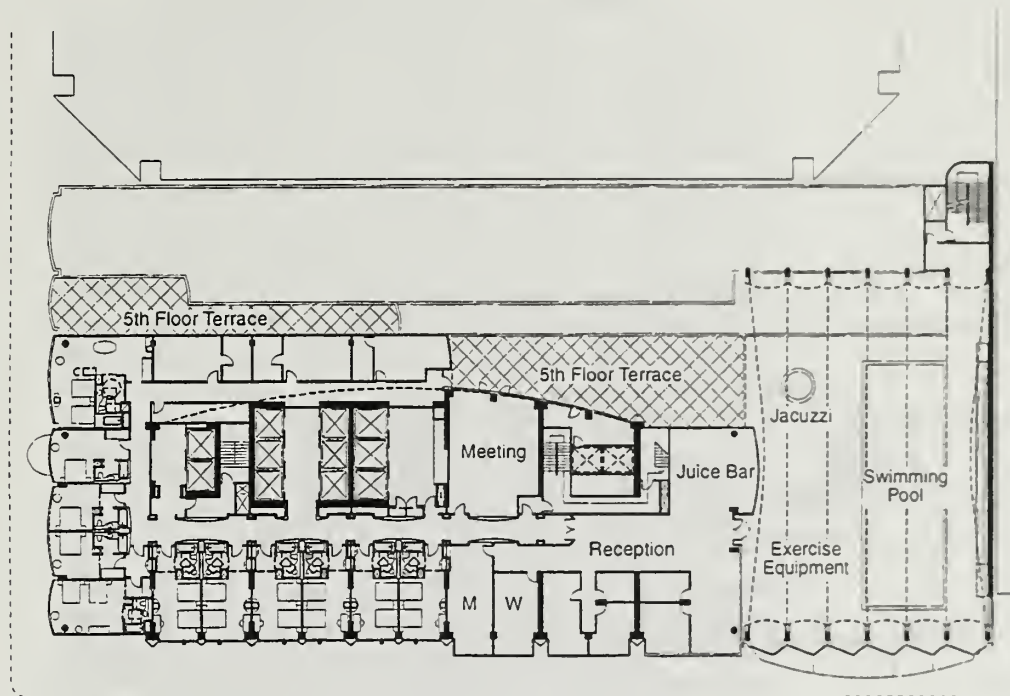
Source: Patri Merker Architects

SECOND FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 5



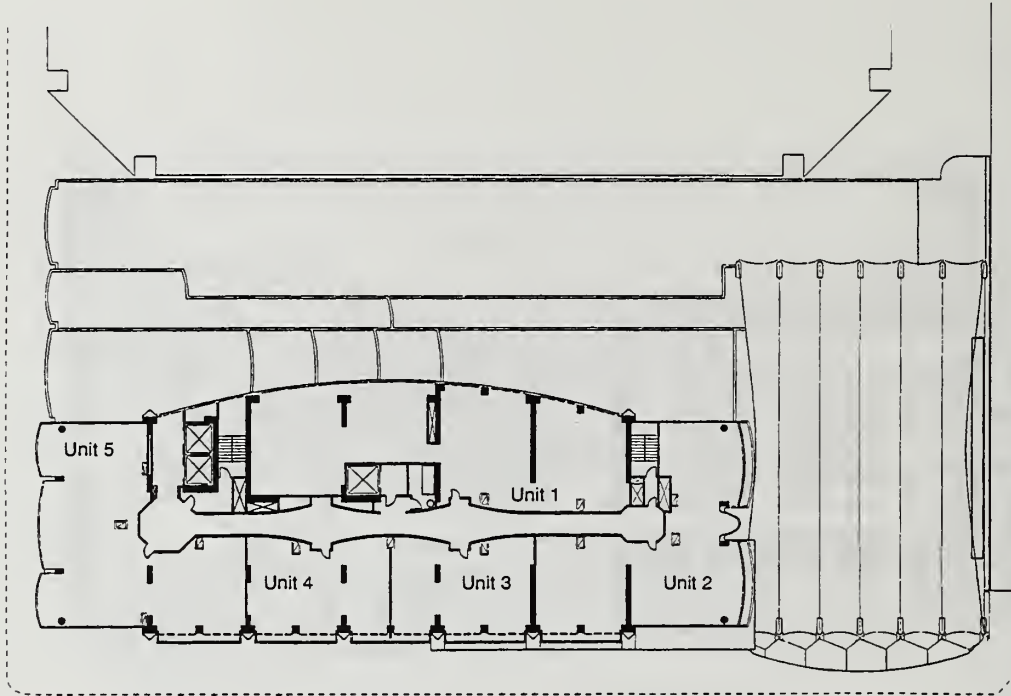
Source: Patri Merker Architects

FOURTH FLOOR PLAN **FIGURE 6**



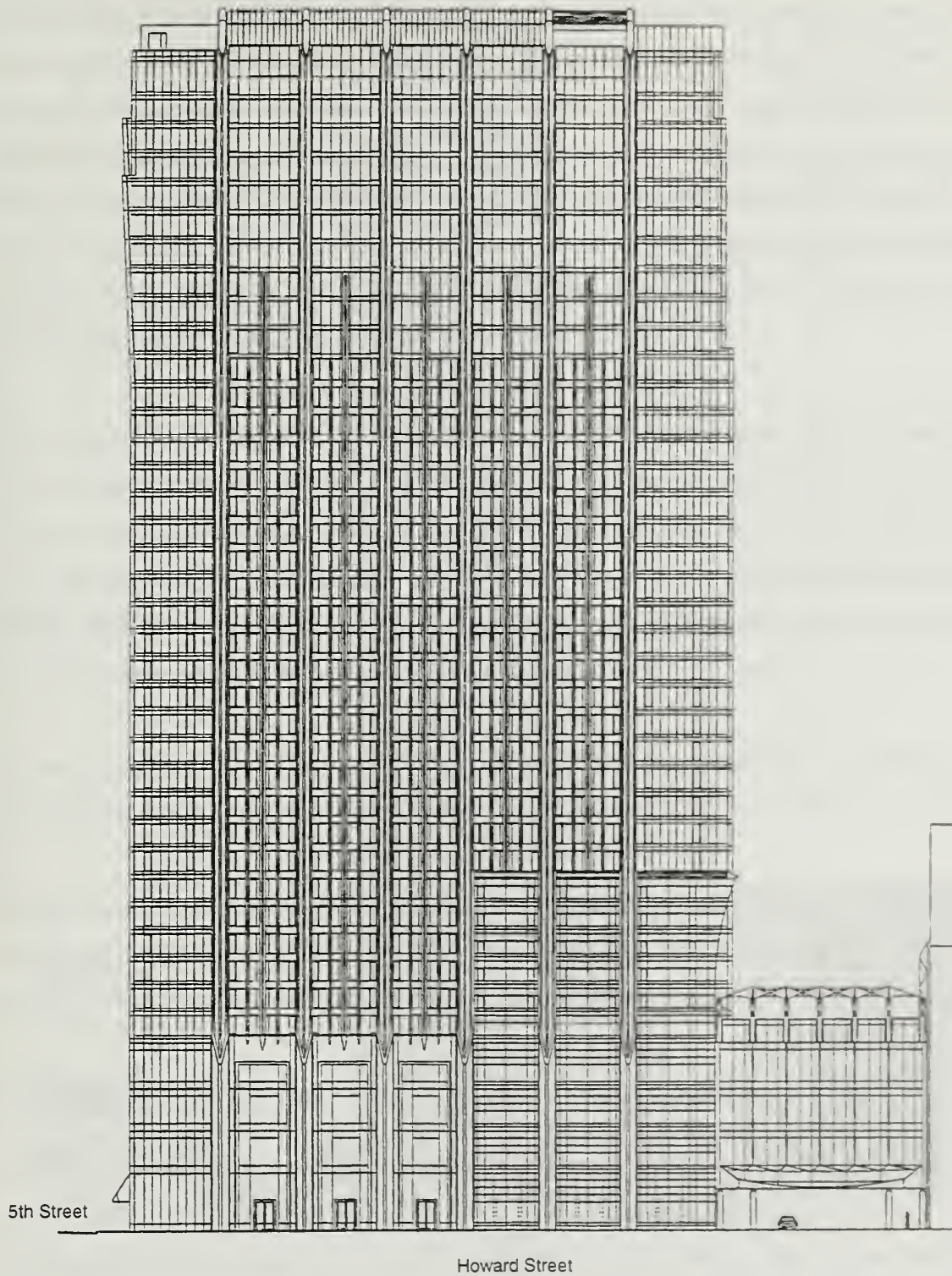
Source: Patri Merker Architects

FIFTH FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 7



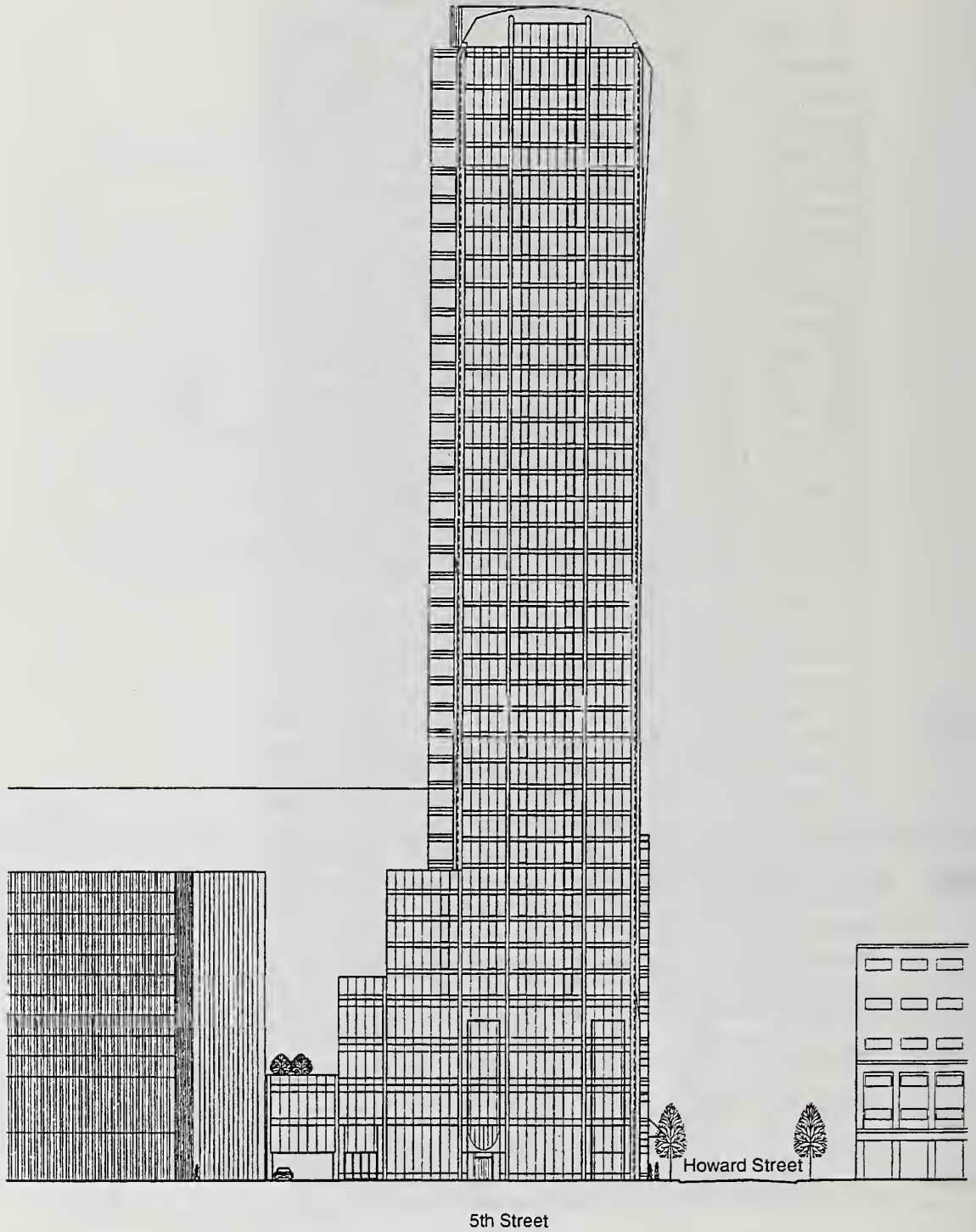
Source: Patri Merker Architects

RESIDENTIAL FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 8



Source: Patri Merker Architects

HOWARD STREET ELEVATION FIGURE 9



Source: Patri Merker Architects

FIFTH STREET ELEVATION FIGURE 10

approximately 7,200 sq.ft., four junior ballrooms, numerous meeting rooms totaling approximately 1,200 sq.ft. and a state-of-the-art equipped board room. Many of the meeting rooms would have direct access to a garden terrace on the third level. The fifth floor of the hotel would include a full-service health club and spa, including a 25-yard swimming pool. Guests would enter the hotel via a porte cochere on Howard Street on the east side of the building, which would also accommodate loading for two tourist buses. The restaurant would be on the southwest corner of the building fronting Fifth and Howard streets with the entrance on Howard Street. The retail space would front onto Fifth Street. A proposed 60-foot taxi-queuing area would be along Howard Street.

Above the hotel would be eleven floors of approximately 67 residential condominiums. Residents would have a separate lobby with concierge service on Fifth Street, two private elevators, and secured parking on the second level of the below grade parking garage. The approximately 67-space parking garage would have ingress and egress on Fifth Street. Residents would be able to select various services from the hotel and one of the hotel's service elevators would provide access to all floors of the condominiums. Residents would also have access to the hotel health club on the fifth floor.

Three loading docks would be provided adjacent to the Wells Fargo Data Center on the north side and would be accessed via the porte cochere off Howard Street.

Project construction would take about 25 months and the facility would open in the Spring of 2004, with construction starting in early 2002. The project construction cost is estimated at \$115 million. The project sponsor is 888 Howard Street Associates, LLC, and the project architect is Patri Merker Architects.

• PROPOSED REVISIONS TO PROJECT

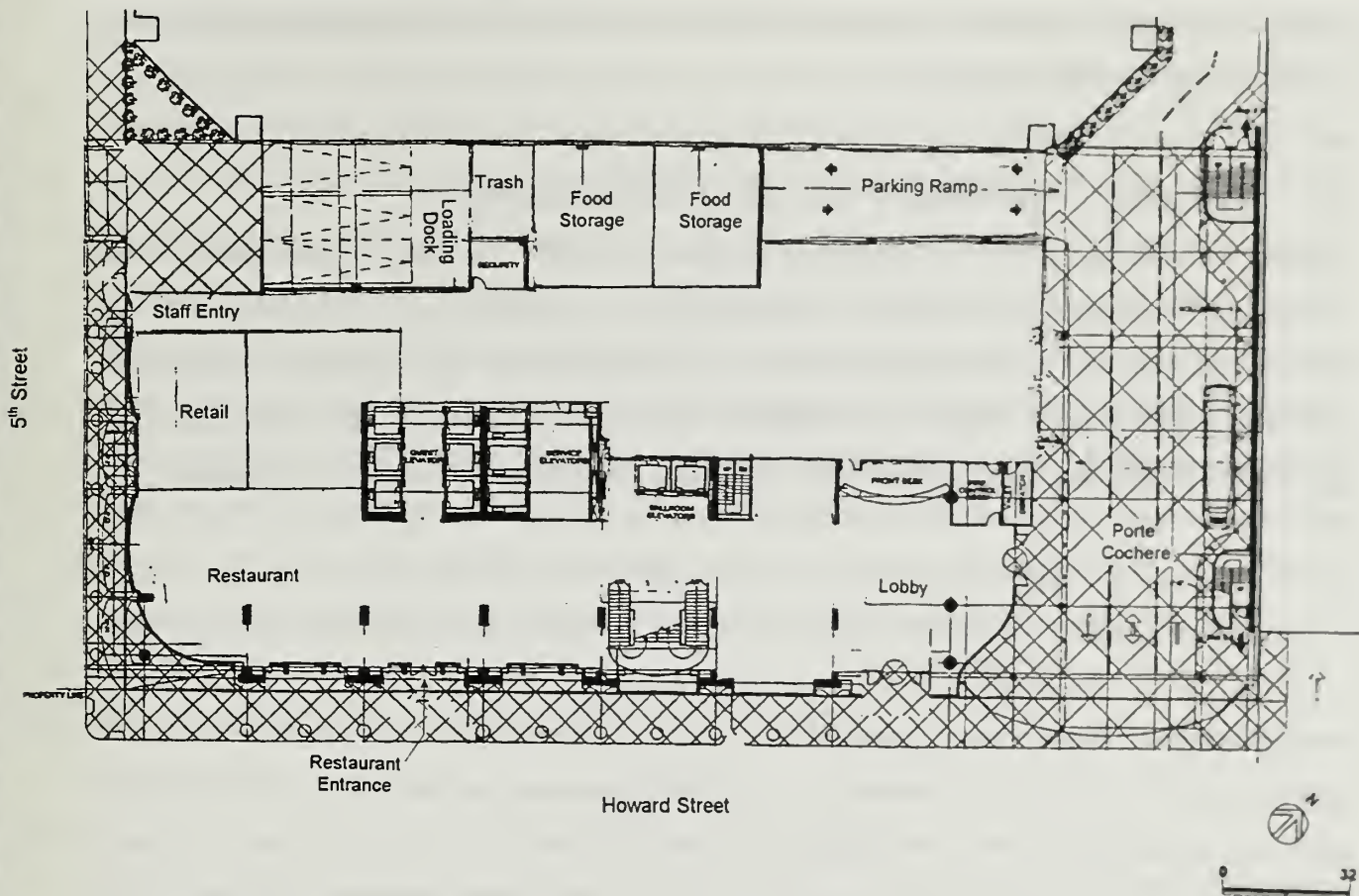
Subsequent to the publication of the Draft EIR, the project sponsor has revised the project to a lower height of 340 feet and eliminated the 67 residential units. The revised proposed project would be a 33-story hotel with approximately 600 rooms and the same amount of restaurant, retail and meeting and conference space as originally proposed (an approximately 4,000 square-foot restaurant on the ground floor, about 1,000

square feet of retail use, and about 40,200 square feet of meeting and conference space). The design of the proposed project would be similar to the original proposal, but 60 feet lower in height. Table A, below, shows a comparison of the proposed project and the proposed revisions.

Table A		
Original Proposed Project and Revised Proposed Project		
	Original Proposal	Revised Proposal
Height	400 feet	340 feet
Number of Stories	39 stories	33 stories
Total Square Footage*	630,000 square feet	487,900 square feet
Number of Hotel Rooms*	500 rooms	600 rooms
Number of Residential Units	67 units	none
Retail Space*	1,000 square feet	1,000 square feet
Restaurant Space*	4,000 square feet	4,000 square feet
Meeting and Conference Space*	42,000 square feet	42,000 square feet
Parking Garage	two levels below grade	one level below grade
Number of Parking Spaces*	128 independently accessible or 61 independently accessible and 100 valet park	75 independently accessible or 115 valet park
Number of Loading Docks	3	3

* All numbers are approximate

The revised proposed project would feature one level of parking in the underground parking garage that would accommodate 75 self-parked cars, or approximately 115 valet-parked cars. There would be another basement level that would be used for storage and mechanical space. The loading docks would be moved from the proposed location on the porte cochere and relocated to Fifth Street where the entrance to the residential parking garage was proposed for the original proposed project (Figure A, page 27b). The



Source: Patri Merker Architects

● REVISED PROJECT GROUND FLOOR PLAN FIGURE A

potential environmental impacts of the revised project in the areas of land use and zoning; urban design and visual quality; shadow and wind; population, employment and housing; and transportation and parking, are discussed in the following chapter.³

D. PROJECT APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

This EIR will undergo a public comment period as noted on the cover, including a public hearing before the Planning Commission on the Draft EIR. Following the public comment period, responses to written and oral comments will be prepared and published in a Draft Summary of Comments and Responses, presented to the Planning Commission for certification as to accuracy, objectivity, and completeness. No approvals or permits may be issued before the Final EIR is certified by the Planning Commission.

³ Section 31.19(c)(1) of the San Francisco Administrative Code states that a modified project must be reevaluated and that, "If, on a basis of such reevaluation, the Environmental Review Officer determines, based on the requirements of CEQA, that no additional environmental review is necessary, this determination and the reasons therefore shall be noted in writing in the case record, and no further evaluation shall be required by this Chapter." The CEQA Guidelines call for additional environmental documentation unless the lead agency determines that the changes that are proposed for the project would not involve any new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.

The revised project was evaluated for its potential for environmental impacts particularly in relationship to the originally proposed project. The analysis found that the revised project would result in fewer or less intense potential environmental impacts than the original project as it would be a smaller building that would generate a less intensive amount of use.

The comparison of the potential environmental impacts found that the revised project would either have less or substantially the same environmental impacts as the original project in the environmental areas of air quality; construction noise; utilities and public services; geology, topography and seismicity; biology; water; hazardous materials; energy and natural resources. All the mitigation and improvement measures that were proposed in these environmental areas for the original project will also be implemented with the revised project.

The *San Francisco Planning Code*, which incorporates by reference the City's Zoning Maps, governs permitted uses, densities, and the configuration of buildings within San Francisco. Permits to construct new buildings (or to alter or demolish existing ones) may not be issued unless either the proposed project conforms to the *Code*, or an exception is granted pursuant to provisions of the *Code*. The proposed project would require Conditional Use authorization from the Planning Commission, including a public hearing, for the hotel use, pursuant to the Planning Code, Sections 216(b), Other Housing (Hotels) and 303(g), Conditional Uses (Hotels and Motels). A Variance to the residential parking requirement would be required for the proposed 67 spaces (18 are required). The proposed project would also require review as a project in a C-3 District under Section 309 of the *Planning Code* by the City Planning Commission. As part of the Section 309 review, the proposed project would seek exceptions to the setback and rear yard requirements (Sections 132.1 and 134 (d)), and exceptions to the ground level wind current requirements (Section 148). No other exceptions would be required for the proposed project only if the associated applications for amendments to the Height, Bulk and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) are approved.

Pursuant to Section 302 of the *Planning Code*, the proposed project would require amendments to the Height, Bulk, FAR, and zoning designations of the site. The proposed change in the Height and Bulk District is from 160-F to 400-M. The 400-M Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 400 feet plus mechanical penthouses, and, for portions of buildings over 100 feet, a maximum dimension of 250 feet and a maximum diagonal dimension of 300 feet. (The existing 160-F Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 160 feet, and, for portions of buildings over 80 feet, a maximum dimension of 110 feet and a maximum diagonal dimension of 140 feet.) The proposed zoning change is from the existing C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) zoning designation to C-3-S (SU), Downtown Commercial Support with Special Use Overlay for Hotel and Residential, to allow for a 7.5:1 FAR for hotel uses and no FAR requirement for Residential uses and related subsurface parking for each use. (In the C-3-S zone, the allowable FAR is 5:1, or 7.5:1 with Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)).

The proposed project would also require amendments to the San Francisco *General Plan* corresponding to the changes in height, bulk, and density discussed above. The City's *General Plan*, which provides general policies and objectives to guide land use decisions, contains some policies which relate to physical environmental issues. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such

adopted environmental plan or policy, although, as mentioned above, the proposed project is not consistent with height, bulk, and density provisions of the *General Plan*, and would require amendments to the *Plan*. In general, potential conflicts with the *General Plan* are considered by decision makers independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision whether to approve or disapprove a proposed project. Conflicts either identified in this environmental document or not would be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project.

The proposed project would require approval from the Department of Public Works for a lot split to create an individual parcel for the project from the existing lot that also includes the adjacent existing office building.

Environmental plans and policies are those, like the Bay Area *Air Quality Plan*, which directly address physical environmental issues and/or contain targets or standards which must be met in order to preserve or improve characteristics of the City's physical environment. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy.

In November 1986, the voters of San Francisco approved *Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative*, which added Section 101.1 to the *San Francisco Planning Code* to establish eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service land uses from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; maximization of earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under CEQA; prior to issuing a permit for any demolition, conversion, or change of use; and prior to taking any action which requires a finding of consistency with the General Plan, the City is required to find that the proposed project or legislation is consistent with the Priority Policies. The case report and approval motions for the proposed project will contain the analysis determining whether the proposed project is consistent with the Priority Policies.

- **REVISED PROJECT**

The proposed revised project would seek the same approvals discussed above that pertain to hotel use, except the change in the height limit would be for 340 feet rather than 400 feet. A Variance for residential parking would not longer be sought.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND IMPACTS

An application for environmental evaluation for the proposed project was filed July 31, 2000. On the basis of an Initial Study published on January 20, 2001, the San Francisco Planning Department determined that an EIR was required. The Initial Study determined that the following effects of the proposed project would either be insignificant or would be reduced to a less-than-significant level by mitigation measures included in the proposed project and thus required no further analysis: land use; population; noise; utilities/public services; biology; geology/topography; water; energy/natural resources; hazards; and cultural resources (see Appendix A, page A-1, for the Initial Study). Therefore, the EIR does not discuss these issues. The proposed project's potentially significant impacts in the areas of visual quality and glare, transportation, air quality, shadows, and wind are assessed in this chapter. Land use is discussed in the EIR for informational purposes.

By convention, "east" and "west" in this EIR refer to the directions of Howard and Market Streets and parallel streets. "North" and "south" refer to the directions of Fourth and Fifth Streets and parallel streets.

A. LAND USE, ZONING, AND GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project would not have significant adverse land use impacts (for further information, see Appendix A, page A-15). Land use information is included in the EIR for informational purposes and to orient the reader.

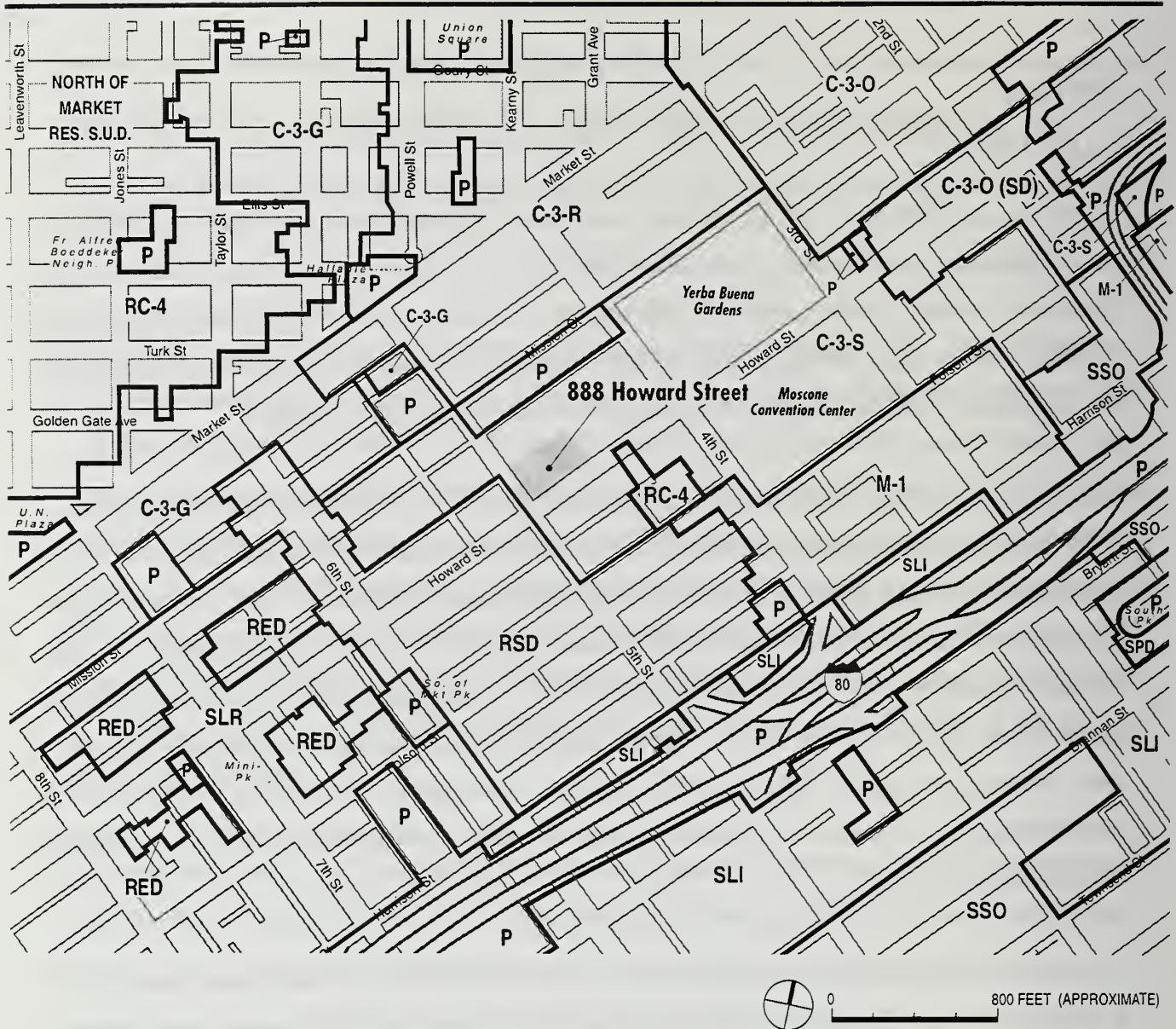
Setting

LAND USE

The project site is within a C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District (see Figure 11, page 32). Zoning districts in the surrounding area include P (Public Use), RSD (Residential Service District), C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial), C-3-R (Downtown Retail District), RC-4 (Residential-Commercial Combined District, High-Density), and M-1 (Light Industrial). The proposed project is in a 160-F Height and Bulk District. Existing heights in the project area are shown in Figure 12, page 33.

Section 210.3 of the San Francisco *Planning Code* describes the C-3-S District in the following manner: “This district accommodates near the intensive downtown core areas important supporting functions such as wholesaling, printing, building services, secondary office space and parking. It also contains unique housing resources. Motor vehicle access from freeway ramps to this district is good, and truck and automobile traffic is heavy; at the same time, the district is within walking distance of rapid transit on Market Street. In its eastern portion, the district also serves in part as an expansion area for offices, at a lesser intensity than in the Downtown Office District. The district has for the most part been underdeveloped in the past, and opportunities exist for major developments of new uses covering substantial areas.”

The project site is in the South of Market area, near the western border of the Yerba Buena Center (YBC) Redevelopment Area. The South of Market area east of the site and the YBC Redevelopment Area are occupied by office, commercial, hotel, museum, and performing arts uses, including many recently-constructed and high-rise buildings. Further north of the site is the Financial District with high-rise office buildings up to 400 feet or more in height, many of relatively recent construction. The portion of the South of Market area to the south and west of the site is occupied primarily by two- to five-story buildings dating from the early part of the twentieth century, housing a mix of residential, hotel, retail, office, commercial, and light industrial uses.



Source: San Francisco City Planning Department

EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS IN THE PROJECT VICINITY FIGURE 11

Immediately to the east of the proposed project site on the same side of Howard Street, the Moscone Expansion III Project (Moscone West) is under construction. Further east, in the block bounded by Mission, Howard, Third, and Fourth Streets, is the north block of the Moscone Center, with the five-story Metreon building on the east side of Fourth Street, the mid-block Yerba Buena Gardens, and the Visual Arts and Performing Arts Centers on the west side of Third Street. The south block of the Moscone Center occupies the block bounded by Folsom, Howard, Third, and Fourth Streets, and includes the Carousel, Zeum building, and ice skating rink. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is on the east side of Third Street, between Howard and Mission Streets, and the 29-story W Hotel is on the northeast corner of Howard and Third Streets. The 39-story, 400-foot Marriott Hotel is located at the northeast corner of Fourth and Mission Streets. The 41-story, 418-foot-high Related Companies residential/retail/institutional project is under construction on the northeast corner of Third and Mission, and the 40-story, 434-foot-high, Starwood St. Regis hotel and residential project has started construction on the southeast corner of Third and Mission.

At the southwest corner of Natoma and Fifth Streets opposite the proposed project site is a private parking area, with a two-story commercial building further south, and a five-story building with a ground-floor restaurant and residential units above on the northwest corner of Howard and Fifth Streets. Immediately north of the proposed project site at Fifth and Minna Streets is a seven-story office building occupied by Wells Fargo Bank. Further north on the east side of Fifth Street, the seven-level Fifth and Mission Garage occupies the area bounded by Minna, Mission, Fourth, and Fifth Streets. Further north, the eight-story Hotel Pickwick is on the northeast corner of Mission and Fifth Streets, with a two-story building used for parking adjacent to Hotel Pickwick. On the west side of Fifth Street, on the northwest corner of Fifth and Mission Streets, is the closed historic US Mint Museum building. The block bounded by Fifth, Mission, Minna, and Mary Streets is occupied by the San Francisco Newspaper Agency building (formerly the San Francisco Chronicle Building), which extends over Minna Street to the south. Further south is a private surface parking area serving the Newspaper Agency building. In the block bounded by Mission, Market, Fourth and Fifth is the under-construction 250-foot-high, 22-story Emporium Site Hotel complex. The 37-story Four Seasons Hotel and Residences is under construction on the south side of Market Street between Third and Fourth Streets.

On the south side of Howard Street, between Fourth and Fifth Streets, there is a nine-story senior housing facility at the southwest corner of Fourth and Howard Streets. To the west of this building on the south side of Howard Street are a two-story commercial building, a landscaped parking area serving the 320 and 330 Clementina Towers to the south, a three-story commercial/office building, a vacant three-story commercial building, a three-story commercial/office building, the two-story Pacific Gas and Electric Company Energy Center, and a two-story commercial building with a restaurant on the first floor. This commercial building is adjacent to the Burlington Coat Factory building, which faces the project site and extends to Fifth Street. The Burlington Coat Factory building houses a variety of retail outlets and other uses and is currently being renovated to include office/research, development and technology uses. The eastern portion of this building is six stories tall and the western portion, located on the southeast corner of Fifth and Howard Streets, is three stories. The southwest corner of Fifth and Howard Streets is occupied by a surface parking lot, and on the northwest corner of Howard and Fifth Streets, opposite the proposed project site, is a five-story building with a ground-floor restaurant and residential units above. On Howard Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets are a number of buildings two to five stories in height, most of which date from the early part of the twentieth century and contain printing, commercial, office/research, development and technology, residential, live/work, hotel, restaurant/bar, auto repair uses and parking.

South of the proposed project site on Fifth Street, on the southeast corner of Tehama and Fifth Streets, is a two-story commercial building, with an approximately 15-story apartment tower at the northeast corner of Clementina and Fifth Streets. Further west, Tehama Street is occupied by residential, live/work, and commercial buildings of one to eight stories in height, with the majority between two and four stories.

PLANS

- Two major planning efforts are currently underway in areas in close proximity to the project site. The project site is just across the street from the South of Market Project Area and a block from the Mid-Market Survey Area. In addition, the project site is south of the Yerba Buena Redevelopment plan area. These efforts under the direction of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency could lead to land-use changes in these surrounding areas in the future. Where land use changes are reasonably foreseeable they will be incorporated into the evaluation of the cumulative impacts for the project.

The General Plan and Downtown Plan

The project site is within the part of San Francisco covered by the Downtown Plan, an Area Plan of the *San Francisco General Plan*. The proposed project would intensify use of the site in a manner generally consistent with the Downtown Plan, although the proposed project would require amendments to the

Height, Bulk, FAR, and zoning designations of the site, as discussed in Comparison with Existing Plans, Plans and Approvals, below.

The Downtown Plan is the policy document that guides most growth and development in San Francisco's downtown. Centered on Market Street, the plan covers an area roughly bounded by Van Ness Avenue on the west, The Embarcadero on the east, Folsom Street on the south, and Washington Street on the north. The plan contains a number of objectives and policies that address the following issues: provision of space for commerce, retail, housing, and open space; preservation of the past; urban form, movement to, from, and within the downtown area, and seismic safety.

Some key objectives and policies of the *General Plan* relevant to the proposed project are noted here, others may be addressed during consideration of project approval.

Downtown Plan Objectives and Policies

- Objective 1, Policy 1, to “encourage development which produces substantial net benefits and minimizes undesirable consequences. Discourage development which has substantial undesirable consequences which cannot be mitigated.”
- Objective 2, to “maintain and improve San Francisco’s position as a prime location a for financial, administrative, corporate and professional activity.”
- Objective 4, to “enhance San Francisco’s role as a tourist and visitor center.”
- Objective 4, Policy 1, to “guide the location of new hotels to minimize their adverse impacts on circulation, existing uses and scale of development.”
- Objective 6, to “provide space for future office, retail, hotel service and related uses within acceptable levels of density in downtown San Francisco.”
- Objective 13, Policy 4, to “relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the City pattern and to the height and character of existing and proposed development.”
- Objective 15, Policy 1, to “ensure the new facades relate harmoniously with nearby facade patterns.”
- Objective 16, Policy 4, to “use designs and materials and include activities at the ground floor to create pedestrian interest.”

Commerce and Industry Element

- Objective 1, Policy 1, to “encourage development which provides substantial net benefits and minimizes undesirable consequences. Discourage development which has substantial undesirable consequences that cannot be mitigated.”
- Objective 3, to “provide expanded employment opportunities for City residents, particularly the unemployed and economically disadvantaged.”

Urban Design Element

- Objective 3, Policy 1, to “promote harmony in the visual relationships and transitions between new and older buildings.”
- Policy 2, to “avoid extreme contrasts in color, shape and other characteristics which will cause new buildings to stand out in excess of their public importance.”
- Policy 5, to “relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the city pattern and to the height and character of existing development.”
- Policy 6, to “relate the bulk of buildings to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.”

Environmental Protection Element

- Objective 1, Policy 4, to “assure that all new development meets strict environmental quality standards and recognizes human needs.”
- Objective 14, to “promote effective energy management practices to maintain the economic vitality of commerce and industry.”
- Objective 14, Policy 1, to “increase the energy efficiency of existing commercial and industrial buildings through cost-effective energy management measures.”

Community Safety Element

- Objective 2, to “preserve, consistent with life safety considerations, the architectural character of buildings and structures important to the unique visual image of San Francisco.”

Zoning

The project site is located in a C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District in San Francisco and a 160-F Height and Bulk District. The C-3-S District accommodates, near the intensive downtown core areas, important supporting functions such as wholesaling, printing, building services, secondary office space and parking. It also contains unique housing resources. In its eastern portion, the district also serves in part as an expansion area for offices, at a lesser intensity than in the Downtown Office District. At the time the district was created, it was identified as having been for the most part been underdeveloped in the past, with opportunities for major developments of new uses covering substantial areas.

• Revised Project

The uses proposed by the original project are permitted by the *Planning Code*. Although the proposed uses for the revised project would be a change from the existing uses, the project would not have a significant impact on land use. With the revised project, the residential use would be eliminated and the revised project would include hotel, restaurant, retail, and parking uses which are also permitted by the *Planning Code*.

The revised project is proposed at a height of 340 feet, 60 feet less than the original project, and the same height permitted by the Height and Bulk district the zoning in the adjacent Yerba Buena Gardens and Moscone Convention Center. The current height district at the project site is 160 feet, and the revised project would still require a change in the Height and Bulk District, albeit from the 160-F district to a 340-I district. Therefore, the effects of the revised project would be substantially the same as the proposed project.

B. VISUAL QUALITY/URBAN DESIGN

Setting

Visual quality in an urban setting is comprised of elements such as building scale, height, architectural features and materials, patterns of buildings along street frontages, and views of public open space or plazas or of more distant landscape features such as hills, the Bay, or built landmarks such as bridges

These elements help define the sense of place in an urban context. In general, positive urban design character in San Francisco, as reflected in General Plan policies, encourages “street walls” of buildings fronting on sidewalks, maintaining buildings of architectural character, moderating scale of new development to relate to existing, older buildings, and protection of important views of open space or landmarks.

The project site, in Assessor’s Block 3724, is in the southwest corner of the block bounded by Howard, Fifth, Fourth, and Minna Streets. The site is currently occupied by a landscaped parking area. The project vicinity is a mix of residential, office, commercial, retail, hotel, museum, performing arts, and light industrial uses of varying ages. The area to the east and north of the site is characterized by a higher proportion of more recent buildings, many of them high-rises, including the Yerba Buena Center to the east and the downtown financial district to the north. These buildings include contemporary designs such as the Moscone Convention Center, the Yerba Buena Visual Arts and Performing Arts Centers, the Sony Metreon Entertainment Center, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Wells Fargo Bank building immediately north of the project site, the Fifth & Mission Garage, the W Hotel, and the Marriott Hotel.

In contrast, the area to the south and west of the project site is characterized by older two- to five-story buildings dating from the early part of the twentieth century.

As discussed in the previous section, A. Land Use, Zoning, and General Plan Consistency, Setting, there are several high-rise buildings existing or under construction in the project vicinity. Existing buildings include the 39-story, 400-foot Marriott Hotel on the northeast corner of Fourth and Mission Streets and the 29-story W Hotel on the northeast corner of Howard and Third Streets. Buildings under construction include the 37-story Four Seasons Hotel and Residences on the south side of Market Street between Third and Fourth Streets, the 40-story Starwood St. Regis hotel and condominium project at the southeast corner of Third and Mission Streets, and the 41-story Related Companies residential/retail/institutional project on the northeast corner of Third and Mission Streets.

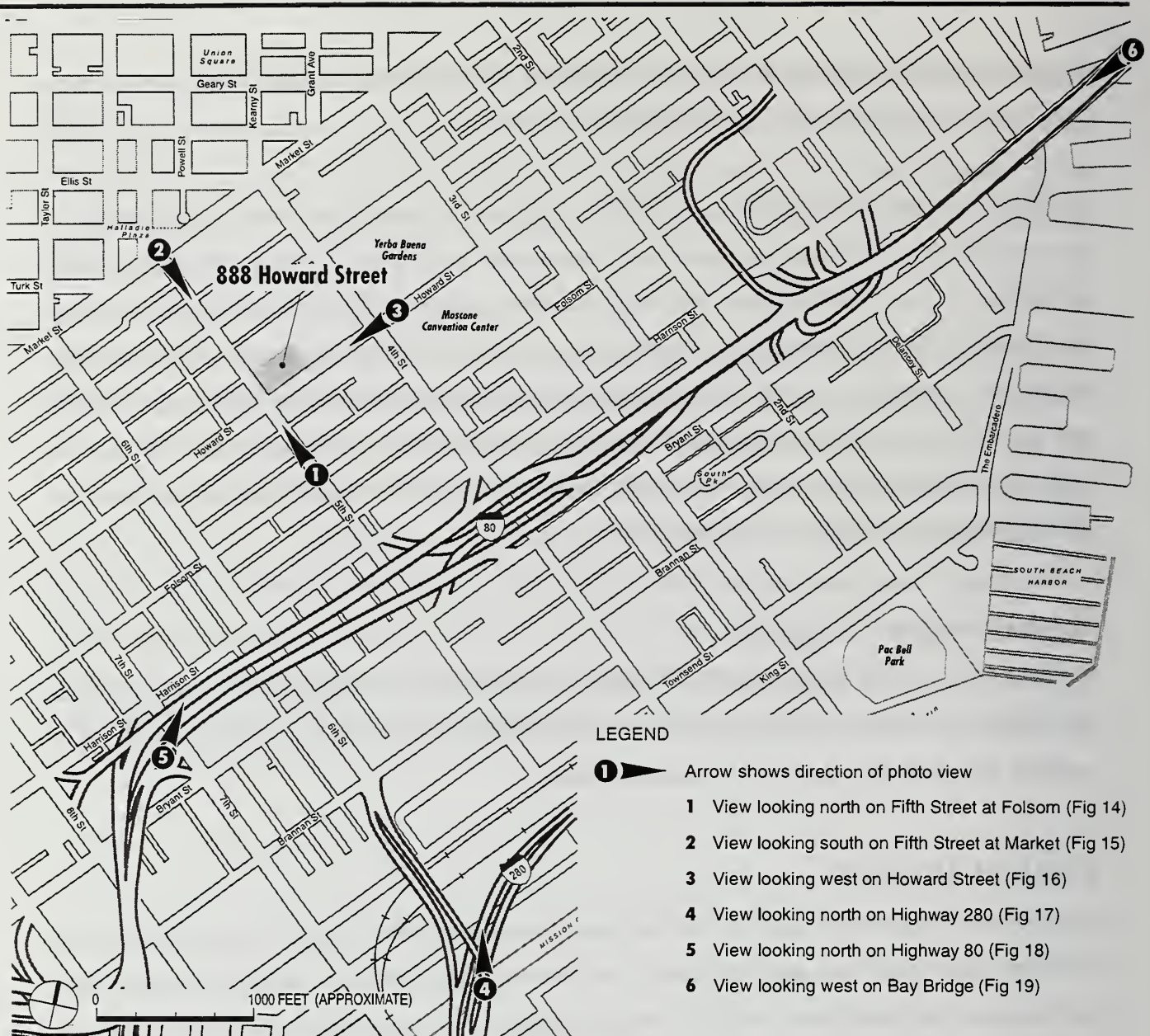
Significance Criteria

A project may result in significant adverse visual quality impacts if it (1) degrades or obstructs scenic views from public areas, (2) introduces new sources of light or glare, or (3) has demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area.

Project Impacts

The proposed project would construct a 39-story, approximately 400-foot-high mixed use building at the northeast corner of Howard and Fifth Streets. The proposed project would be substantially higher than most surrounding buildings and would be visually prominent from many vantage points, both near and distant. Photosimulations of the proposed project from various viewpoints are identified in Figure 13, page 40. (Note: The photosimulations deliberately accentuated the color of the proposed project to provide contrast).

Figure 14, page 41, is a simulation of the proposed project viewed from a point one block to the south, at Fifth and Folsom Streets. The proposed project's height and configuration would make it readily apparent from this location.



Source: During Associates

PHOTO LOCATIONS FIGURE 13



Site Photo

Source: Square One Productions



Photomontage

VIEW LOOKING NORTH ON FIFTH STREET AT FOLSOM STREET FIGURE 14

Figure 15, page 43, is a view of the proposed project from a point on Market Street two blocks to the north, looking south along Fifth Street. The proposed project would be visible from portions of Market Street, such as the intersection of Market and Fifth Streets depicted in Figure 14, while existing buildings along Market Street would block street-level views of the proposed project from other segments of Market Street.

Figure 16, page 44, is a view of the proposed project from the intersection of Howard and Fourth Streets approximately one block east of the site, looking west along Howard Street. In addition to the proposed project, Figure 16 simulates the completion of the Moscone Expansion III Project (Moscone West) that is currently under construction immediately adjacent to the project site on Howard Street. The proposed project would be readily apparent, due to its height relative to surrounding buildings.

Figure 17, page 45, is a view of the proposed project from a more distant vantage point, Interstate Highway 280 (I-280) looking north. This photomontage includes the existing skyline and simulations of the proposed project plus two under-construction projects: the 40-story St. Regis hotel and condominium project and the 41-story Related Companies residential/retail/institutional project. The proposed project would be readily visible from this vantage point and would constitute a new visual element and one of the taller buildings of the downtown skyline, although it would not exceed the heights of the highest existing buildings. The proposed project, although apparent, would be similar in visual character to other high-rise buildings in the existing downtown cityscape, and would constitute an addition to the prevailing view rather than a contrasting visual element.

Figure 18, page 46, is a view of the proposed project from a second more-distant vantage point, Interstate Highway 80 (I-80) looking north. This photomontage includes the existing skyline, the proposed project, and three approved projects: the 22-story Emporium Site Hotel complex, the 40-story St. Regis hotel and condominium project, and the 41-story Related Companies residential/retail/institutional project. As the highest building in its immediate vicinity, the proposed project would be readily apparent and represent a new visual element, but would be similar in visual character to other high-rise buildings in the existing downtown cityscape. If the three approved projects are not constructed for any reason, the proposed project would be even more apparent.



Site Photo

Source: Square One Productions



Photomontage

VIEW LOOKING SOUTH ON FIFTH STREET AT MARKET FIGURE 15

Site Photo



Photomontage



Source: Square One Productions

VIEW LOOKING WEST ON HOWARD STREET FIGURE 16

Site Photo



Photomontage



Source: Square One Productions

VIEW LOOKING NORTH ON HIGHWAY 280 FIGURE 17

Site Photo



Photomontage



Source: Square One Productions

VIEW LOOKING NORTH ON HIGHWAY 80 FIGURE 18

Figure 19, page 48, is a view of the proposed project from a third more-distant vantage point, the Bay Bridge looking west. Along with the existing skyline and proposed project, this photomontage simulates three approved projects: the 22-story Emporium Site Hotel complex, the 40-story St. Regis hotel and condominium project, and the 41-story Related Companies residential/retail/institutional project. The upper portion of the proposed project would be visible, while the remainder would be screened by intervening structures. From this vantage point, the proposed project would be visible but less conspicuous than other structures in the downtown skyline. However, if the approved buildings are not constructed the proposed project would be more conspicuous.

At night, the project building would be prominently illuminated from within. This lighting, in combination with the building's height and configuration, would make the proposed project clearly visible at night. This lighting, while apparent, would not cause excessive light or glare.

The topography of the area surrounding the site is flat, and existing development limits views from streets and sidewalks. The proposed project would be visible from various locations, but it would not block any views along public view corridors. In the vicinity of the project site, public views are available from Yerba Buena Gardens (one block east of the project site), Hallidie Plaza (two blocks north of the project site), South of Market Recreation Center (one block west of the site), Howard-Langton Mini-Park (approximately two and one-half blocks west of the project site), Union Square (approximately 0.4 mile northeast of the site), and Boeddeker Park (approximately 0.4 mile northwest of the site), as shown in Figure 1: Project Location (page 16). Views from Yerba Buena Gardens to the west toward the project site are limited by the five-story Metreon building between the Gardens and the site. Most views from Hallidie Plaza are limited by intervening buildings on the south side of Market Street. Views from South of Market Recreation Center would also be limited by intervening buildings along Sixth Street. From other more distant public spaces (Howard-Langton Mini-Park, Union Square, and Boeddeker Park), intervening buildings would block most views of the proposed project, and the proposed project would be less prominent due to its distance. Thus, while the proposed project would be visible from various locations, possibly including some open spaces, the proposed project would not block any public view corridors. Private buildings in the area may have views of hills to the west, the downtown skyline to the northeast, or beyond. Views from public streets or private properties, especially nearby high-rise buildings, may be

Site Photo



Photomontage



Source: Square One Productions

VIEW LOOKING WEST ON BAY BRIDGE FIGURE 19

altered by the proposed construction, although this effect would be limited by the fact that the neighborhood is already densely developed.

The proposed project would be substantially higher than the majority of 3 to 5 story buildings in the immediate vicinity, although it would be similar in height to the highest buildings in the downtown area further from the project site. As such, it would be a major new element and a noticeable increase in the existing scale of development, and would be visible from many nearby and distant viewpoints. The proposed project would represent an expansion and extension of the growth of contemporary high-rise development from the downtown area to the north and east, and the proposed project would comprise the highest building on the southern border of this development. The proposed project would be similar in height, visibility, and visual character, however, to the 39-story Marriott Hotel at Fourth and Mission Streets, the 37-story Four Seasons Hotel and Residences recently completed on Market Street between Third and Fourth Streets, the 40-story Starwood St. Regis hotel and condominium project and the 41-story Related Companies residential/retail/institutional project under construction at the intersection of Third and Mission Streets. The design, materials, and exterior treatment of the proposed project would also be consistent with these buildings and other contemporary buildings in the area. The proposed project would be visible from more distant vantage points. Although the proposed project would contrast with the existing lower scale development to the south and west of the project site, it would be consistent in character and height with the existing cityscape of high-rise contemporary buildings in the downtown area (C-3 Zoning Districts) to the North and East. As a result, it cannot be concluded that the proposed project would have demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area.

In conclusion, the proposed project would not block public views or vistas, cause excessive light or glare, or have demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area. For these reasons, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on urban design and visual quality.

• Revised Project

The building design of the revised proposed project would be similar to the original proposed project only 60 feet lower in height.

The revised proposed project would be substantially higher than most surrounding buildings and would be visually prominent from many viewpoints, both near and distant. The proposed revised project's height and configuration would make it readily apparent from nearby locations such as Fifth and Folsom Streets (one block to the south), Market and Fifth Streets (two blocks to the north), and Howard and Fourth Streets (one block to the east). From more distant vantage points to the south, such as Highways 80 and 280 looking north, the proposed revised project would be readily visible as the highest building in its immediate vicinity, although it would be similar in visual character and height to other high-rise buildings in the existing downtown cityscape.

While the revised proposed project would be visible from various locations, possibly including some open spaces, it would not block any public view corridors. Views from public streets or private properties may be altered by the proposed construction, although this effect would be limited by the fact that the neighborhood is already densely developed.

The revised proposed project would not have demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area, and thus, would have a less than significant impact on urban design and visual quality.

C. SHADOWS AND WIND

Shadows

SETTING

The existing landscaped parking lot on the site does not cast any substantial shadows on streets and sidewalks in the project vicinity.

The nearest open space areas owned by, or under the jurisdiction of, the Recreation and Park Department are South of Market Recreation Center located west of Sixth Street between Howard and Folsom Streets (one block west of the site), Howard-Langton Mini-Park at Howard and Langton Streets (approximately two and one-half blocks west of the project site), Union Square (approximately 0.4 mile northeast of the site), and Boeddeker Park (approximately 0.4 mile northwest of the site). Yerba Buena Gardens, one block east of the project site, is within the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area and is maintained by the Moscone Convention Center. Hallidie Plaza, two blocks north of the project site, is owned by the Department of Real Estate. Neither of these open space areas is in Recreation and Park Department jurisdiction.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

City Planning Code Section 295, adopted in 1984 pursuant to voter approval of Proposition K., prohibits the issuance of building permits for structures over 40 feet in height that would shade property under the jurisdiction of, or designated to be acquired by, the Recreation and Park Commission unless the City Planning Commission, in consultation with the General Manager of the Recreation and Park Commission, determines that the shade would not have a significant impact on the use of such property. Project effects would be considered significant if the proposed project created new shadow in violation of the *City Planning Code*.

In addition, Section 147 of the *City Planning Code* states that any new development in the C-3 districts should be shaped, consistent with the dictates of good design and without unduly restricting the development potential of the site in question, to reduce substantial shadow impacts on public plazas and publicly accessible spaces. Factors to be taken into account in the determination of shadow impacts

include the amount of open area shadowed, the duration of the shadow, and the importance of the type of open space being shadowed.

IMPACTS

Shadow Effects

Shadow patterns for existing, proposed, and approved buildings in the project area, and the proposed project, are shown in Figures 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25, pages 52 through 57 for representative times of the day during the four seasons: during winter and summer solstices, when the sun is at its lowest and highest, and during spring and fall equinoxes, when the sun is at its midpoint. Shadow conditions from July through December mirror conditions from January through June (notwithstanding daylight saving time). The times selected for analysis include 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) in December and March, and 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) in June and September¹. The analysis includes shadow cast on streets, sidewalks, pedestrian areas, and open space in the area of potential project impact. The diagrams show existing and approved building shadow and, in darker outline, new shade resulting from the proposed project. As mentioned previously, “east” and “west” refer by convention to the directions of Howard and Market Streets and parallel streets. “North” and “south” refer to the directions of Fourth and Fifth Streets and parallel streets. As shown in Figure 20, true north is about 45 degrees counter-clockwise from the Fifth Street alignment.

December 21

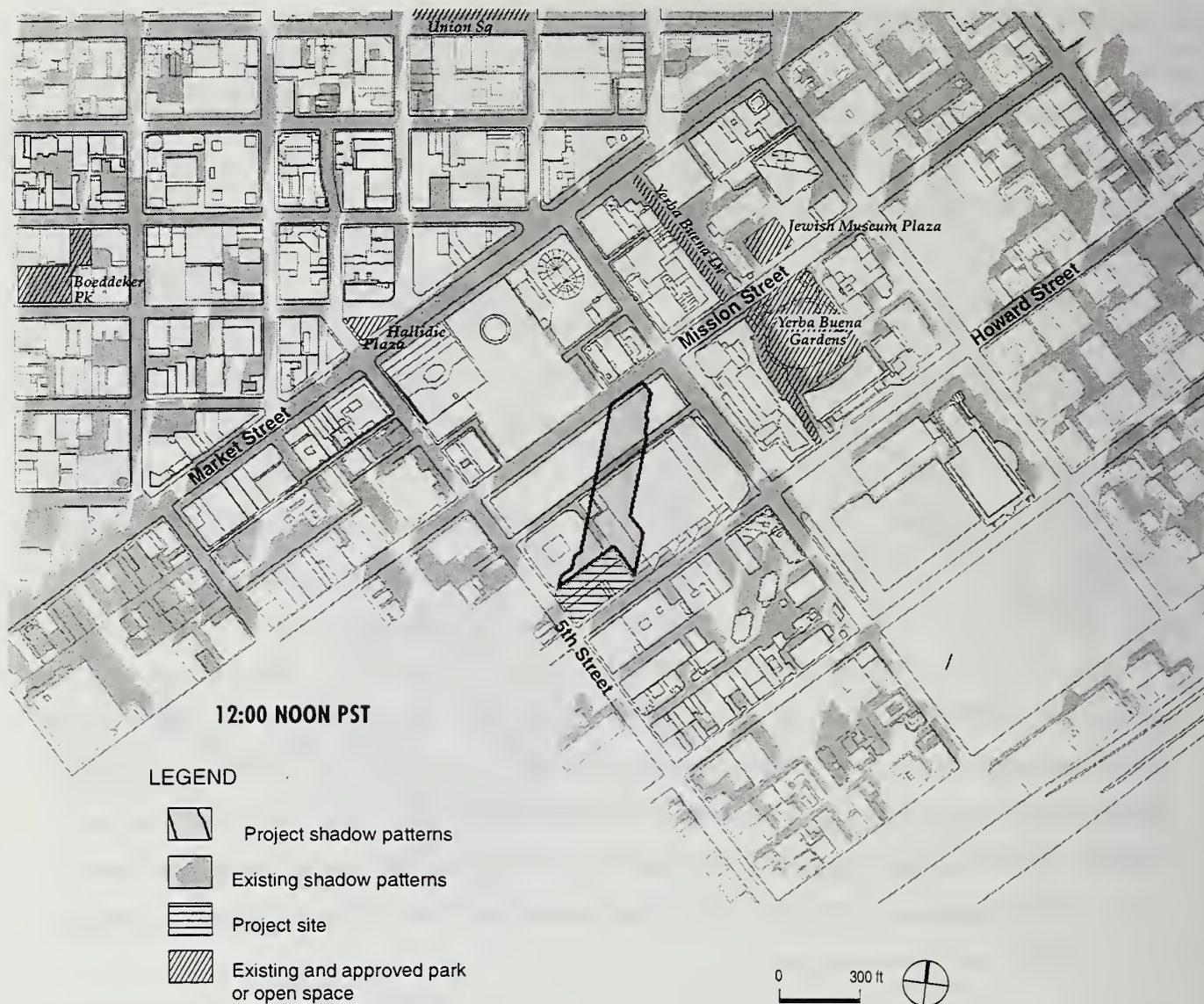
At 10:00 a.m. PST on December 21, new shadow would cover portions of both Minna and Mission Streets (see Figure 20). The proposed project would not shade South of Market Recreation Center to the west, Howard-Langton Mini-Park to the west, Union Square to the northeast, Boeddeker Park to the northwest, Yerba Buena Gardens to the east, or Hallidie Plaza to the north, at 10:00 a.m.

At noon (see Figure 21), new shadow from the proposed project would extend across a portion of Minna Street and extend as far as Mission Street, a portion of which would also be covered. The proposed project would not shade South of Market Recreation Center, Howard-Langton Mini-Park, Union Square, Boeddeker Park, Yerba Buena Gardens, or Hallidie Plaza, at noon.



Source: CADP

PROJECT SHADOW PATTERNS—DECEMBER 21, 10AM PST FIGURE 20



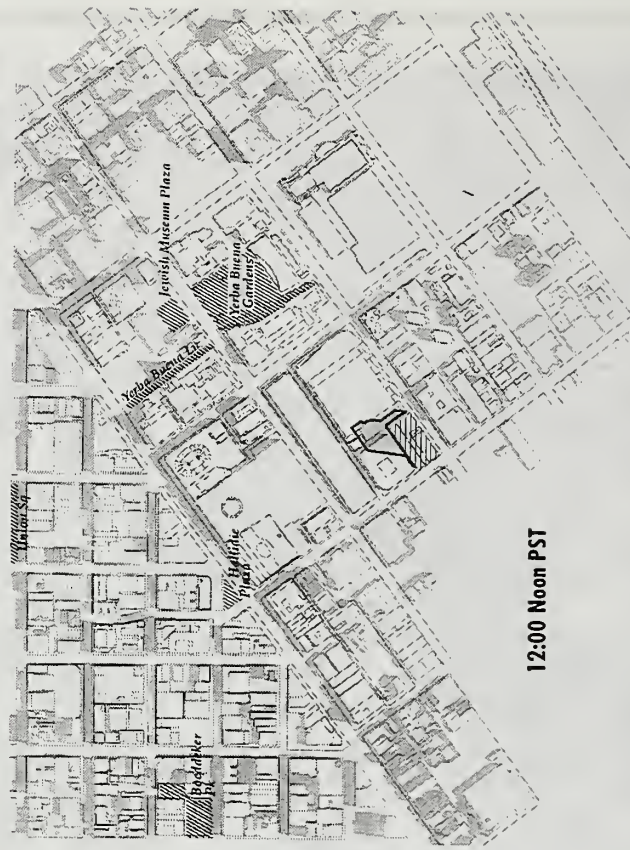
Source: CADP

PROJECT SHADOW PATTERNS—DECEMBER 21, 12 NOON PST FIGURE 21

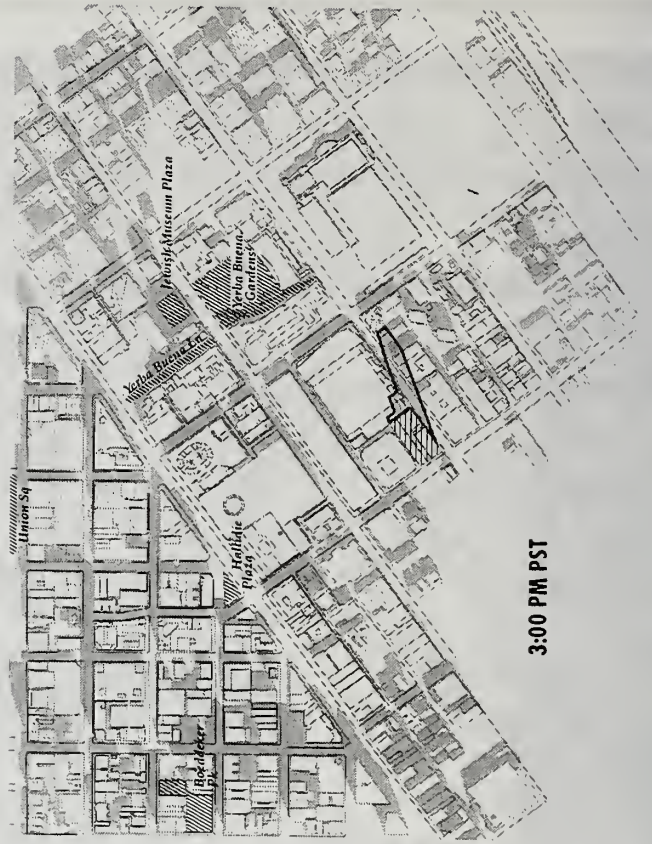


Source: CADP

PROJECT SHADOW PATTERNS—DECEMBER 21, 3PM PST FIGURE 22



12:00 Noon PST







3:00 PM PST



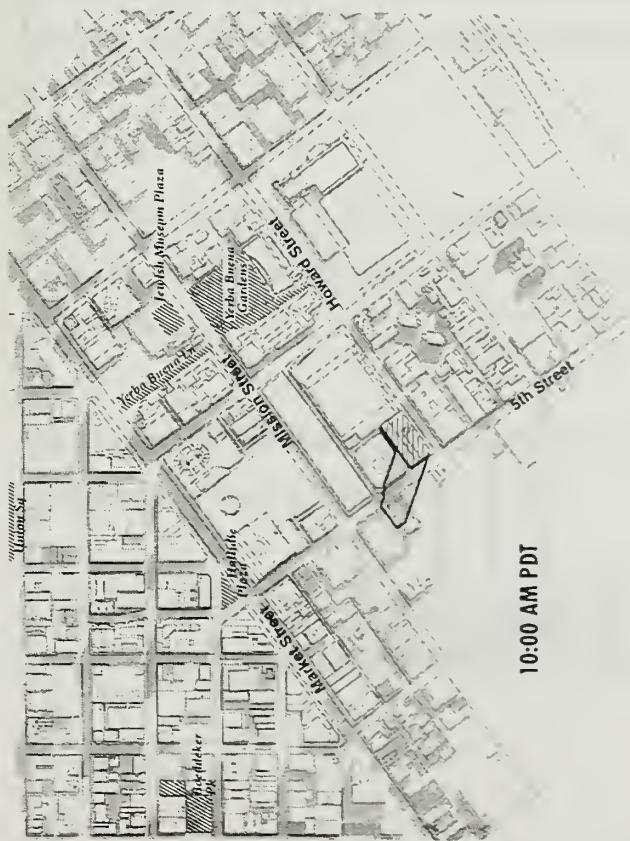
10:00 AM PST

LEGEND

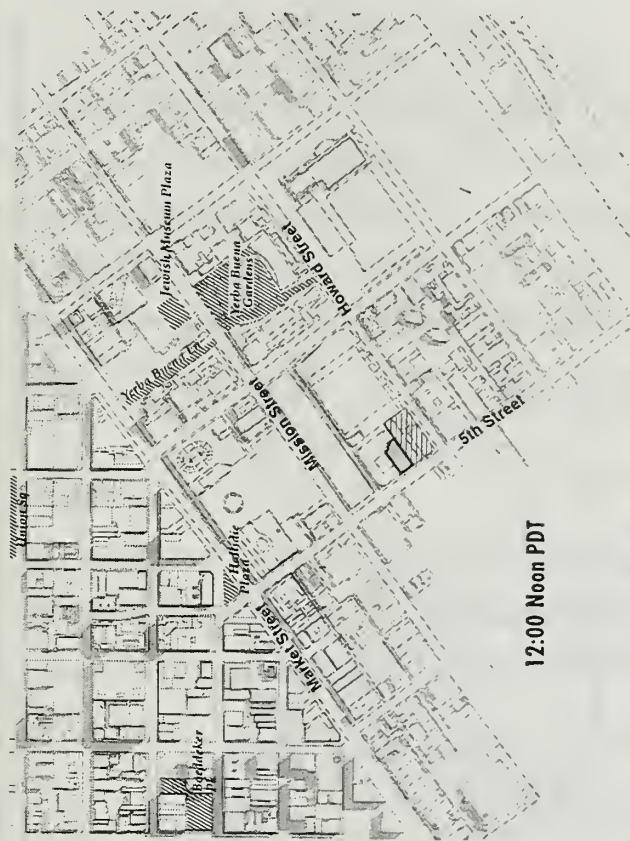
-  Project shadow patterns
-  Existing shadow patterns
-  Project site
-  Existing and approved park or open space



Source: CADP



10:00 AM PDT







12:00 Noon PDT



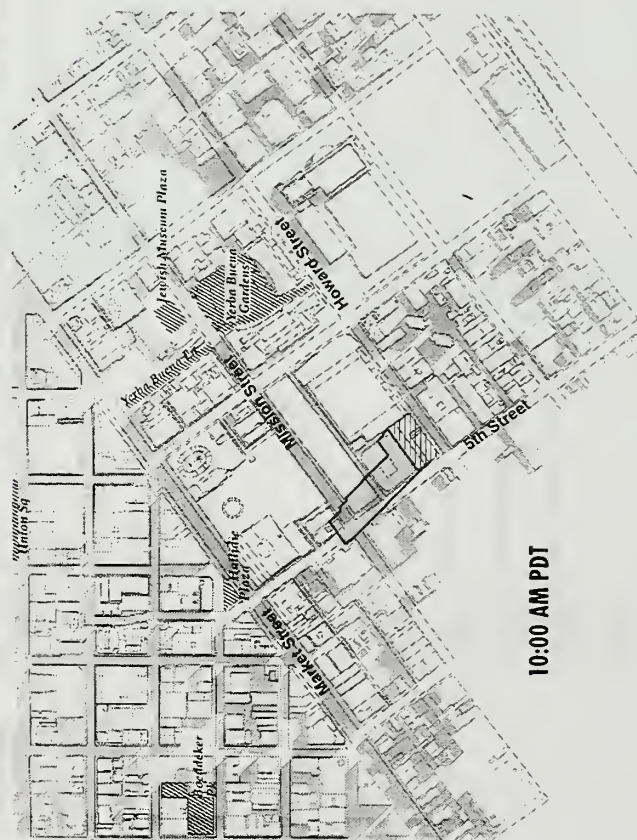
3:00 PM PDT

LEGEND

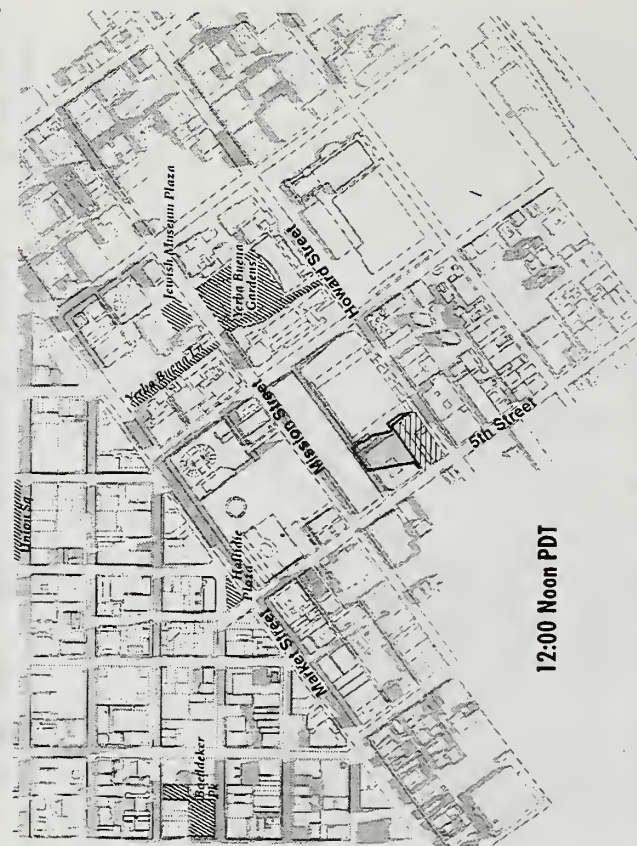
-  Project shadow patterns
-  Existing shadow patterns
-  Project site
-  Existing and approved park or open space



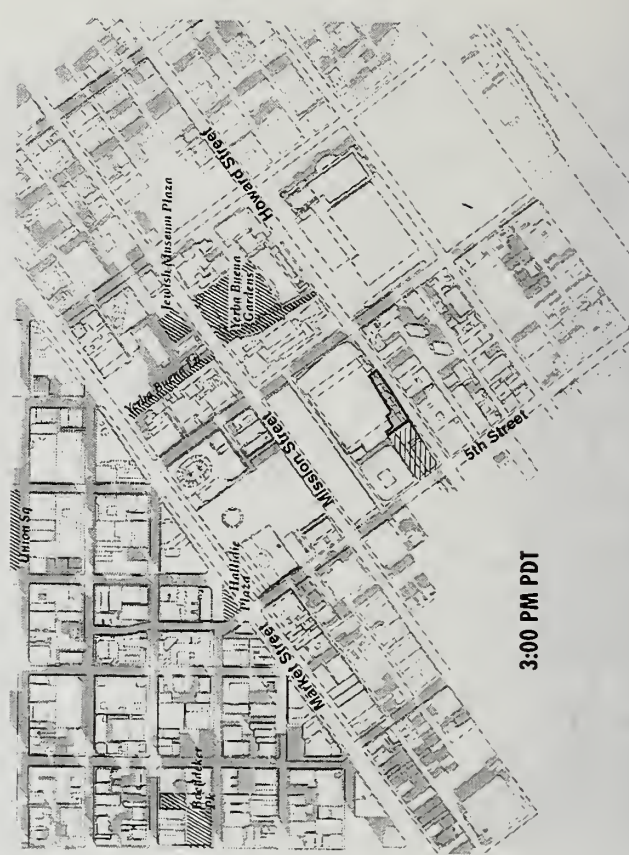
Source: CADD



10:00 AM PDT







12:00 Noon PDT



3:00 PM PDT

LEGEND

-  Project shadow patterns
-  Existing shadow patterns
-  Project site
-  Existing and approved park or open space



At 3:00 p.m.(see Figure 22), the proposed project would shade the north sidewalk of Howard Street between Third and Fifth Streets. This shadow would cover the southernmost portion of Yerba Buena Gardens, which consists of a narrow strip that extends south to Howard Street from the main body of the Gardens. From the relative shadow patterns at noon and 3:00 p.m., it can be inferred that shadow would pass over Yerba Buena Gardens between these hours, shading a different swath of the Gardens at any one time. The proposed project would not shade any of the other open spaces at 3:00 p.m.

March 21

At 10:00 a.m. PST on March 21, new shadow would extend over a portion of Minna Street as far as the southern sidewalk of Mission Street, which would be covered by existing shadow even without the proposed project (see Figure 23). The proposed project would not shade any of the six open spaces at 10:00 a.m.

At noon, new shadow from the proposed project would extend to the north and east, but would not shade any streets or sidewalks, or any of the six open spaces.

At 3:00 p.m., the proposed project would shade a portion of Howard Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. The proposed project would not shade any of the six open spaces at 3:00 p.m.

June 21

At 10:00 a.m. PDT on June 21, new shadow would extend over a portion of Fifth Street northwest of the proposed project site (see Figure 24). The proposed project would not shade any of the six open spaces at 10:00 a.m.

At noon, new shadow from the proposed project would extend to the north, but would not shade any streets or sidewalks, or any of the six open spaces.

At 3:00 p.m., the proposed project would shade a portion of Howard Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. The proposed project would not shade any of the six open spaces at 3:00 p.m.

September 21

At 10:00 a.m. PDT on September 21, new shadow would extend over portions of Fifth and Mission Streets, including the intersection of Fifth/Mission, northwest of the project site (see Figure 25). The proposed project would not shade any of the six open spaces at 10:00 a.m.

At noon, new shadow from the proposed project would extend to the north, and shade a portion of Minna Street. The proposed project would not shade any of the six open spaces at noon.

At 3:00 p.m., the proposed project would shade a portion of the north sidewalk of Howard Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. The proposed project would not shade any of the six open spaces at 3:00 p.m.

In summary, the proposed project would not shade any open space areas owned by, or under the jurisdiction of, the Recreation and Park Department, including South of Market Recreation Center, Howard-Langton Mini-Park, Union Square, and Boeddeker Park. The proposed project also would not shade Hallidie Plaza and the Cable Car Turnaround. The proposed project would shade portions of Yerba Buena Gardens during winter afternoons. Because this shade would be limited to portions of Yerba Buena Gardens on winter afternoons, and Yerba Buena Gardens is not under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department, this impact would be considered less than significant.²

● REVISED PROJECT

Since the shadows cast by the revised proposed project would be shorter than the original proposed project and also would not shade any public open spaces, the shadow impact of the revised proposed project would be considered less than significant.

Wind

SETTING

U.S. Weather Bureau and Bay Area Air Quality Management District data show that westerly (i.e., from the west) to northwesterly winds are the most frequent and strongest winds during all seasons in San

Francisco.³ Of the 16 primary wind directions measured at a Weather Bureau station at the United Nations Plaza (at a height of 132 feet), four directions occur most frequently and account for most of the strongest winds: northwest, west-northwest, west, and west-southwest. Calm conditions occur about two percent of the time. Average wind speeds are highest during summer and lowest during winter. The strongest peak winds, however, occur during winter, when speeds of up to 47 miles per hour have been

recorded.⁴ Typically, the highest wind speeds occur during the mid-afternoon hours, and the lowest occur during early morning.

Pedestrian Comfort Wind Criteria

Wind conditions affect pedestrian comfort on sidewalks and in other public areas. The comfort of pedestrians varies under different conditions of sun exposure, temperature, clothing, and wind speed. Winds up to four miles per hour have no noticeable effect on pedestrian comfort. With winds from four to eight miles per hour, wind is felt on the face. Winds from eight to 13 miles per hour disturb hair, cause clothing to flap, and extend a light flag mounted on a pole. Winds from 13 to 19 miles per hour raise loose paper, dust, and dry soil, and disarrange hair. The force of winds from 19 to 26 miles per hour is felt on the body. With 26 to 34 miles per hour winds, umbrellas are used with difficulty, hair is blown straight, walking steadily is difficult, and wind noise is unpleasant. Winds over 34 miles per hour make it difficult to maintain one's balance, and gusts can blow a person over.

Large buildings can redirect wind flows around and down to street level, resulting in increased wind speed and turbulence at street level. To provide a comfortable wind environment for San Franciscans, the City established specific comfort criteria for evaluation of proposed buildings. The *City Planning Code* specifically outlines these criteria for the Downtown Commercial (C-3) Districts and for Rincon Hill, Van Ness Avenue, and part of the South of Market Area.⁵ The project site is in the C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District. The pedestrian comfort criteria in Section 148 of the *City Planning Code* are based on pedestrian-level wind speeds that include the effects of turbulence. These adjusted wind speeds are referred to as "equivalent wind speeds." Section 148 establishes an equivalent wind speed of seven miles per hour in seating areas and 11 miles per hour in areas of substantial pedestrian use as comfort criteria. New buildings and additions to buildings may not cause ground-level winds to exceed these levels more than ten percent of the time year round between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. If existing wind speeds exceed the comfort level, new buildings and additions must be designed to reduce ambient wind speeds to meet these requirements. An exception to this requirement may be permitted but only if and to the extent that the project sponsor demonstrates that the building or addition cannot be shaped or wind baffling measures cannot be adopted without unduly restricting the development potential of the building site in question. There is no allowable exception to the hazard criterion. The pedestrian comfort criterion

is currently exceeded at nine of the 29 test locations for existing conditions near the project site as shown in Figure B-1 in Appendix B (page B-9). The highest wind conditions are on the east sidewalk of Fifth Street, at a location on the west boundary of the proposed project and at the southeast corner of Fifth and Mission Streets.

Wind Hazard Criteria

Section 148 of the City *Planning Code* also establishes as a hazard criterion an equivalent wind speed of 26 miles per hour for a single full hour per year. No building or addition would be permitted that would cause wind speeds to exceed the hazard level for more than one hour of any year.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

As noted, the *Planning Code* contains both wind comfort and hazard criteria (Section 148 and other sections, noted above). A project that would cause exceedances of the comfort standards would not be considered to have a significant impact. The hazard criterion is the significance threshold for a project that would cause equivalent wind speeds to reach or exceed 26 miles per hour for a single full hour of the year would be found to have a significant impact.

IMPACTS

Methodology

Using a wind tunnel and a scale model of the downtown San Francisco area surrounding the project site, wind speed measurements were made at 29 test locations, 28 at street level locations and on location atop the Fifth and Mission Parking Garage. Tests were conducted for the project site for base-case (existing) and with-project conditions. The test report included in Appendix B of the EIR, and Figure B-1, page B-9, shows the wind study measurement locations. The base-case conditions consisted of existing conditions on the project site, plus approved or under-construction buildings in the project vicinity including the proposed Emporium Site Hotel on Mission Street. The wind tunnel tests followed *Planning Code* Section 148 methodology, adjusted to account for the wind speed profile at the project site at Howard and Fifth Streets. Appendix B presents the wind tunnel test methodology and results. Wind speeds do not exceed

26 mph under base-case conditions. With the proposed project, wind speeds would continue to be below the 26 mph criterion; i.e., the hazard criterion is not currently exceeded at any of the test locations for existing conditions.

Table B-1 in Appendix B (page B-11) lists wind speeds that would be exceeded ten percent of the time. These are points that would exceed the pedestrian comfort criteria. Because all of the test locations studied represent sidewalk or rooftop locations, the 11-mile-per-hour pedestrian comfort criterion is pertinent.

In the base case (existing conditions), wind speeds range from 7 to 20 miles per hour at the 29 locations tested, 9 of which currently exceed the 11-mile-per-hour pedestrian comfort criterion. The locations where the comfort criterion is currently exceeded on sidewalks are on the east side of Fifth Street along the project site and at the southeast corner of Fifth and Mission Streets.

Project Wind Effects

The proposed project would result in wind speeds ranging from 7 to 20 miles per hour, a range higher than existing conditions. As shown in Figure B-1 and identified in Table B-1 in Appendix B, with the project 12 of the 29 test locations would exceed the comfort criterion. In five cases, the locations where the comfort criterion is exceeded under existing conditions would continue to exceed the criterion after project construction. Seven additional locations that currently meet the criterion would exceed the criterion. At four locations that currently exceed the comfort criterion, the criterion would be met with the proposed project. A net of three new pedestrian comfort criterion exceedances would be caused by the proposed project.

The greatest changes in wind speeds on sidewalks would be increases from 11 to 17 miles per hour at the south sidewalk on Howard Street and from 11 to 20 miles per hour at the southwest corner of the project site at the intersection of Fifth and Howard Streets.

As required by the *Planning Code*, the project would include street trees planted along both the Howard and Fifth Street sidewalks. The addition of large street trees along the sidewalks could noticeably reduce

wind speeds in pedestrian areas; however, this mitigation would not necessarily provide sufficient wind speed reductions to eliminate the new exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

With the proposed project, including the required street trees, the predicted frequency of winds would not exceed the 26 miles per hour hazard criterion.

The siting of a large structure is expected to change wind flows, speeding up the wind at some locations and slowing it down elsewhere in the vicinity. Even a moderate-size structure placed on the windy area of the project site can be expected to result in changes in the durations of criterion exceedances and changes in the locations at which those criterion exceedances occur. Experience indicates that for buildings in very windy areas it is common for new buildings to eliminate some existing exceedances and create others. Given the existing windy conditions of the site and vicinity and the magnitude of the changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from a structure the size of the proposed project, it may not be possible to design any structure that fully meets the goals of the project and that fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet Section 148 criteria at all locations in the vicinity of the site.

In summary, the proposed project is located in an area with moderate existing wind conditions. The proposed project would not create new wind hazard exceedances.

● REVISED PROJECT

The wind conditions created by the proposed revision to the project building would be the same or slightly less than the changes in wind speed measured for the original proposed project, and would also be considered less than significant.

NOTES - Shadows and Wind

- ¹ The shadows cast by the proposed project would only affect public open spaces on December 21st and the times are shown in larger figures for easier review. The other days and times are shown in smaller scale, one day per page.
- ² The new Moscone West Convention Center adjacent to the proposed project is considering the use of photovoltaic cells on the roof. The amount of existing shadow is about 2.63 percent of the total square-foot hours (sfh) of sunlight available, and the proposed project would add approximately 0.23 percent sfh. Thus, the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the amount of sunlight available to power the photovoltaic cells. The actual use of photovoltaic cells is still in the planning stage and other considerations such as San Francisco weather patterns, layout of the cells, and cost-benefit are still under study. The calculations of existing and project shadow are available for public review in file No. 2000.790 at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, Fifth floor.
- ³ The U.S. Weather Bureau data used in this analysis were gathered at a weather station atop the Old Federal Building at 50 United Nations Plaza during the years 1945 through 1950. During each of these years, data were taken hourly for 16 wind directions. The database, consisting of 32,795 hourly observations, is of sufficient size to provide a reliable estimate of future wind conditions in San Francisco.
- ⁴ E. Jan Null, *Climate of San Francisco*, NOAA Technical Memorandum, *NWS WR-126*, February 1978.
- ⁵ *City Planning Code*, Sections 148, 249.1(b)(3), 243(c)(9), 263.11(c).

D. TRANSPORTATION

A transportation study for the proposed project was conducted by Wilbur Smith Associates.¹ The results are summarized in this section.

Setting

ROADWAY NETWORK

The project site is located in the South of Market area of downtown San Francisco, in the block bounded by Minna Street to the north, Fifth Street to the west, Howard Street to the south, and Fourth Street to the east (Figure 1, page 16: Site Location). These streets provide local access to and from the site. As mentioned above, in the South of Market area, streets that run in the northwest/southeast direction are generally considered north/south streets, and streets that run in the southwest/northeast direction are generally considered east/west streets.

Highways. Two regional freeways provide the primary regional access to the project site. Interstate 80 (I-80), located about two blocks south of the project site, connects San Francisco to the East Bay and points east via the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. U.S. Highway 101 (U.S. 101) serves San Francisco and the Peninsula/South Bay, and extends north via the Golden Gate Bridge to the North Bay. U.S. 101 and I-80 merge south of the project site. Nearby eastbound access is provided at the Fifth/Bryant on-ramp and at the Fourth/Bryant off-ramp. Nearby westbound access is provided at the Fourth/Harrison on-ramp and at the Fifth/Harrison off-ramp. In addition to U.S. 101 and I-80, the third regional freeway, Interstate 280 (I-280), provides regional access from the South of Market area to southern San Francisco, the Peninsula, and the South Bay. I-280 has an interchange with U.S. 101 south of the project area. Access to I-280 is via on- and off-ramps at the intersection of Sixth/Brannan.

Market Street. Market Street is a two-way arterial that runs between The Embarcadero to the east and Portola Drive to the west. In the downtown area, Market Street runs in a northeast-southwest direction (east-west by the convention used in this EIR). In the vicinity of the project site, Market Street has two lanes in each direction. West of Fifth Street, one of the travel lanes in each direction is reserved for transit vehicles only. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Market Street is designated as a Transit Conflict Street in the Congestion Management Program (CMP) Network, a Transit Preferential Street (transit oriented), a Citywide Pedestrian Network Street and a Neighborhood Commercial Street. In addition, Market Street is part of the #50 bicycle route.

Mission Street. Mission Street is a four-lane arterial that runs in the east-west direction between The Embarcadero and Van Ness Avenue, and continues in the north-south direction west of Van Ness Avenue. In the vicinity of the project site, left turns from Mission Street are prohibited except for buses and taxis. In the westbound direction, one of the travel lanes is dedicated as a right-turn/bus-only lane between Main and Fourth Streets during weekdays, and between Fourth and Eleventh Streets during weekday P.M. peak periods. In the eastbound direction, one of the travel lanes is dedicated as a right-turn/bus-only lane between Eleventh and Fifth Streets during weekday A.M. peak periods, and between Fifth and Beale Streets during weekdays. Metered parking is generally provided on both sides but prohibited during A.M. and P.M. peak periods. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Mission Street is designated as a Transit Preferential Street (transit oriented), a Citywide Pedestrian Network Street and a Neighborhood Commercial Street.

Howard Street. Howard Street is an east-west roadway between The Embarcadero and South Van Ness Avenue. In the vicinity of the project site, Howard Street is a one-way arterial with four travel lanes in the westbound direction. In the downtown area, Howard Street forms a one-way couplet with Folsom Street (located one block to the south). Adjacent to the project site, on-street metered parking is provided on both sides but prohibited on the north curb during the weekday P.M. peak period to provide an additional travel lane. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Howard Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network, a Metropolitan Transportation System (MTS) Network Street, and is part of the #30 bicycle route.

Folsom Street. Folsom Street runs in the east-west direction between The Embarcadero and South Van Ness Avenue, and continues in the north-south direction between South Van Ness Avenue and Ripley Street (south of Cesar Chavez Street). In the downtown area, Folsom Street forms a one-way couplet with Howard Street. In the vicinity of the project site, Folsom Street is a one-way eastbound roadway with four travel lanes, with on-street metered parking provided on both sides of the street. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Folsom Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network and an MTS Street. Folsom Street is part of the #30 bicycle route, and a bicycle lane is provided on the south side of the street.

Harrison Street. Harrison Street runs in the east-west direction between The Embarcadero and South Van Ness Avenue, and continues in the north-south direction between South Van Ness Avenue and Norwich Street (south of Cesar Chavez Street). Harrison Street is a two-way roadway between The Embarcadero and Third Street, and is a one-way westbound roadway between Third Street and Tenth Street. On-street metered parking is generally provided on both sides of the street. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Harrison Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network, an MTS Street, and a Transit Preferential Street (transit important).

Third Street. Third Street is the principal north-south arterial in the southeastern section of San Francisco, running between U.S. 101 (near the San Francisco/San Mateo county line) to Market Street. At Market Street, Third Street continues to the north as Kearny Street. In the vicinity of the project site, Third Street operates one-way northbound and has four travel lanes. On-street parking is generally provided on both sides of the street, but is prohibited in the right lane during the weekday A.M. and P.M. peak periods between Bryant and Mission Streets, and is prohibited in the left lane between Howard and Mission Streets during the same periods. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Third Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network, an MTS Street, a Transit Preferential Street (transit important), and a Neighborhood Commercial Street.

Fourth Street. Fourth Street is a north-south roadway between Market Street and Third Street. North of Market Street, Fourth Street connects with Stockton Street and Ellis Street. Between Market and Townsend Streets, Fourth Street is one-way southbound with four travel lanes. In the vicinity of the project site, Fourth Street has on-street metered parking on both sides. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Fourth

Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network, an MTS Street, a Transit Preferential Street (transit important), and a Neighborhood Commercial Street.

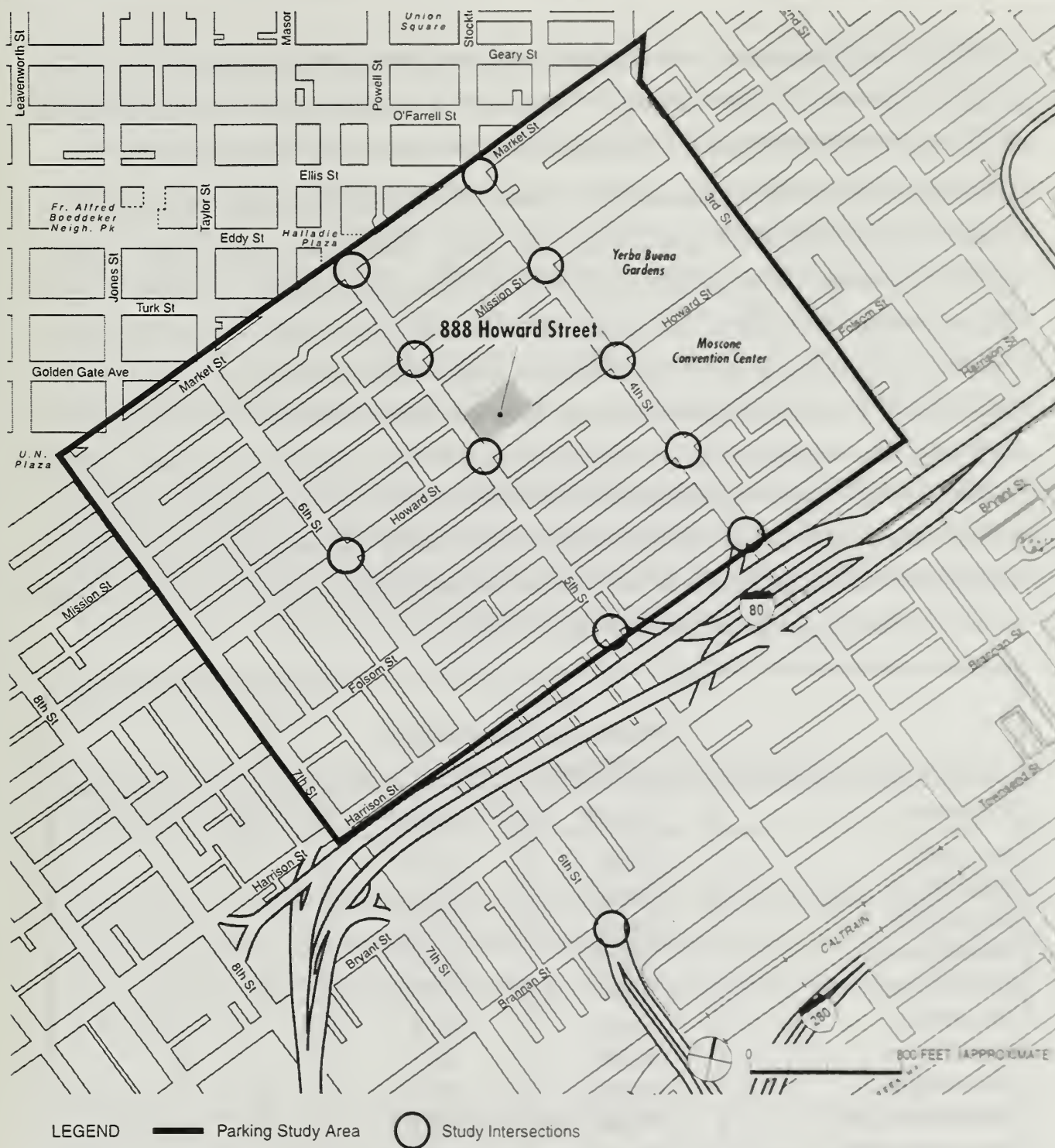
Fifth Street. Fifth Street is a north-south roadway between Market Street and Townsend Street. North of Market Street, Fifth Street becomes Cyril Magnin Street. Fifth Street operates both northbound and southbound and has two lanes in each direction. Adjacent to the project site, Fifth Street has on-street metered parking. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Fifth Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network, an MTS Street, a Transit Preferential Street (transit important), and is part of the #19 bicycle route.

Sixth Street. Sixth Street is a north-south roadway operating between Market Street and Brannan Street, where it turns into on- and off-ramps for I-280. North of Market Street, Sixth Street connects with Taylor Street and Golden Gate Avenue. Sixth Street operates both northbound and southbound and has two lanes in each direction. On-street metered parking is generally provided on both sides, although parking is prohibited on the east side during the P.M. peak period. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Sixth Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network and an MTS Street.

Seventh Street. Seventh Street runs in the north-south direction between Sixteenth and Market Streets, and connects with McAllister Street to the north of Market Street. North of Brannan Street, Seventh Street operates one-way northbound. In the vicinity of the project site, Seventh Street has four travel lanes and on-street metered parking on both sides. In the San Francisco *General Plan*, Seventh Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network and an MTS Street. In addition, Seventh Street is part of the #23 bicycle route, and a bicycle lane is provided on the east side of the street.

INTERSECTION OPERATING CONDITIONS

Levels of service (LOS) were calculated for the eleven study intersections based on the *Highway Capacity Manual (HCM)* methodology (1994 Update) (see Figure 26: Transportation Study Area on page 68). Levels of service are ranked descriptors of traffic flow conditions within an intersection, based on the average delay per vehicle. The levels of service range from LOS A, which indicates free-flowing



TRANSPORTATION STUDY AREA FIGURE 26

conditions, to LOS F, indicating extremely long delays in passing through the intersection. The City of San Francisco considers LOS A through D to be acceptable traffic conditions at an intersection, while LOS E and F are considered unacceptable. Definitions of the levels of service are presented in Appendix C.

Existing levels of service during the weekday P.M. peak hour at the study intersections in the vicinity of the project site range from LOS C to LOS F, as shown in Table 1. Eight of the study intersections currently operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS D or better), while the intersections of Folsom/Fourth and Brannan/Sixth operate at LOS E, with average delays in excess of 40 seconds, and the intersection of Harrison/Fourth operates at LOS F, with average delays in excess of 60 seconds. In general, the poor operating conditions at the three intersections that operate at LOS E or F are due to the high volume of traffic destined to and from the regional freeway network (I-80/U.S. 101 eastbound and westbound and I-280 southbound). At the intersection of Folsom/Fourth, the critical movements are in the southbound-through direction; at the intersection of Harrison/Fourth, the critical movements are in the southbound-through and westbound-right directions; and at the intersection of Brannan/ Sixth, the critical movements are in the northbound-through and eastbound-right directions.

Table 1 Intersection Levels of Service Existing Conditions				
Intersection	Control	Delay	LOS	v/c
Market/Fifth	Signal	26.0	D	—
Market/Fourth	Signal	18.0	C	—
Mission/Fifth	Signal	23.7	C	—
Mission/Fourth	Signal	20.0	C	—
Howard/Sixth	Signal	18.2	C	—
Howard/Fifth	Signal	33.8	D	—
Howard/Fourth	Signal	38.1	D	—
Folsom/Fourth	Signal	44.4	E	0.99
Harrison/Fifth/I-80	Signal	29.4	D	—
Harrison/Fourth/I-80	Signal	>60	F	1.16
Brannan/Sixth/I-280	Signal	44.9	E	0.94

Notes:

Delay presented in seconds per vehicle.

v/c = volume-to-capacity ratio (presented for intersections operating at LOS E or F)

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates, February 2001

During the evening commute hours, the on-ramps to eastbound I-80 (to the Bay Bridge), westbound I-80 (to U.S. 101 and the South Bay) and southbound I-280 (to the Peninsula and South Bay) are typically congested. As a result of high volumes and traffic bottlenecks, the capacity of the on-ramps is restricted and queues form along the major approaches. These queues can affect traffic conditions along Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Streets, as they serve as the primary routes to the freeway network. Depending on the level of congestion on the freeways, traffic congestion and queues typically extend north past Folsom Street. However, during evenings with severe congestion on the freeways, queues may extend further upstream towards Mission and Market Streets. In addition, congestion along Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Streets also affects traffic operations on the adjacent east-west streets, such as Howard and Folsom Streets.

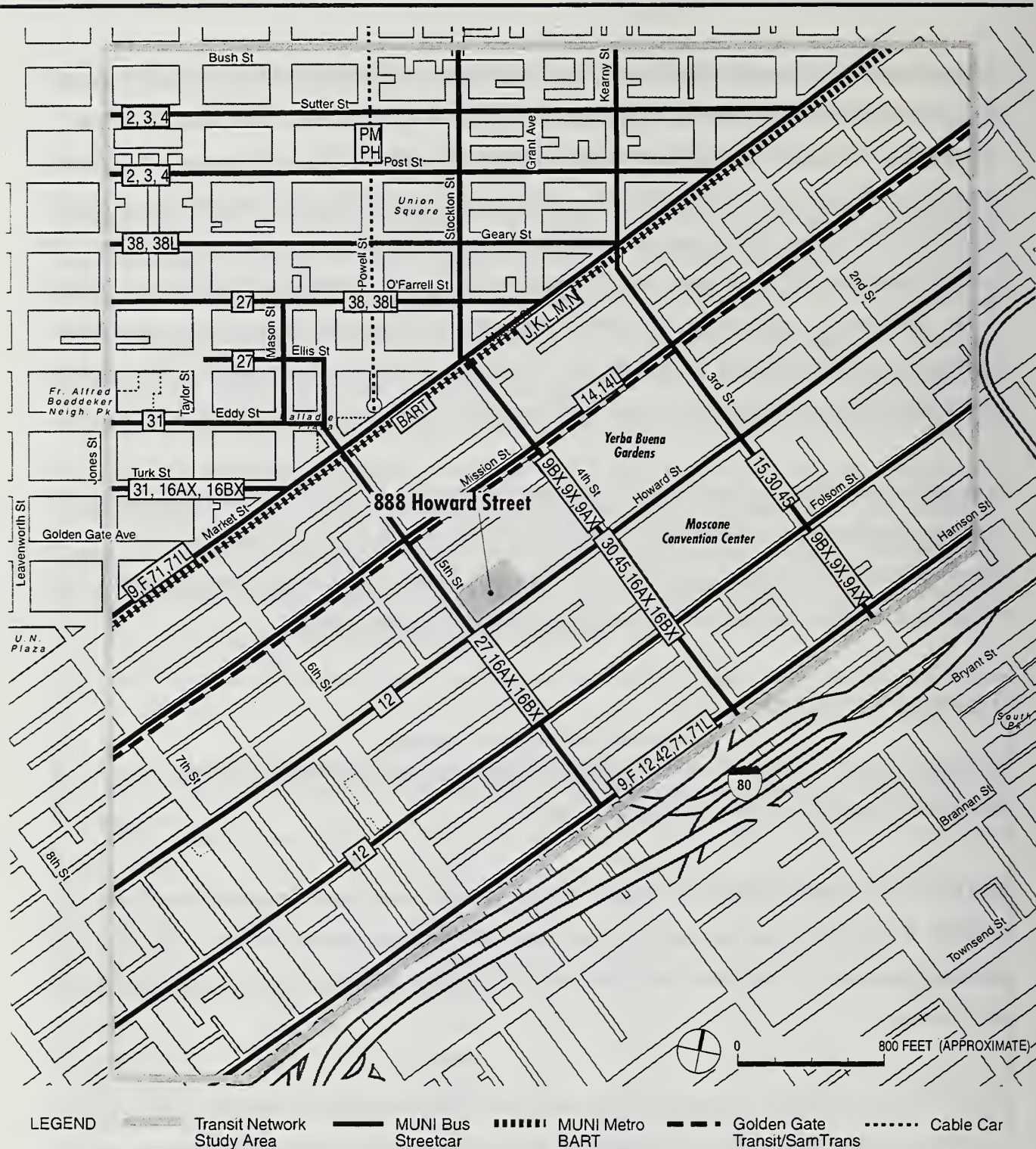
It should be noted that the San Francisco Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT) is considering the creation of bicycle lanes on Fifth Street, a transit only lane on Fourth Street, and Muni is considering the enhanced enforcement of the transit-only lanes on Mission Street. The effects of these proposals would be analyzed as part of the ongoing Fifth & Mission Garage Expansion study.

TRANSIT NETWORK

The project area is served by Muni, BART, Golden Gate Transit and SamTrans. The public transit routes serving the project site are shown in Figure 27, page 71.

San Francisco Municipal Railway (Muni). The project site is well served by Muni, with 25 bus, one streetcar, five light rail, and two cable car lines passing within two blocks of the site. Morning and afternoon headways on these lines range from four to 20 minutes, and midday headways range from six to 20 minutes.

The availability of Muni service capacity was analyzed in terms of a series of screenlines. The concept of screenlines is used to describe the magnitude of travel to or from the greater downtown area, and to compare estimated transit volumes to available capacities. Screenlines are hypothetical lines that would be crossed by persons traveling between downtown and its vicinity and other parts of San Francisco and the region. Four screenlines have been established in San Francisco: Northeast, Northwest, Southwest,



EXISTING TRANSIT NETWORK FIGURE 27

and Southeast, with sub-corridors within each screenline. For purposes of analysis, Muni ridership measured at the four San Francisco screenlines and sub-corridors represents the peak direction of travel and patronage loads for the Muni system, which corresponds with the evening commute in the outbound direction from the downtown area to other parts of San Francisco. Capacity utilization, which relates the number of passengers per transit vehicle to the design capacity of the vehicle, is used to measure the amount of available space within each screenline. In contrast to other transit systems, Muni has established a capacity utilization service standard of 100 percent which includes seated and standing capacity. Thus, Muni screenlines and sub-corridors at or near 100 percent of capacity operate under noticeably crowded conditions with many standees. Because each screenline and most sub-corridors include multiple lines, each with several vehicles during the peak hour, some individual transit vehicles operate at or above 100 percent of capacity and are extremely crowded, while others operate under less crowded conditions. In common with other types of transportation operations such as roadways and parking facilities, transit operators may experience substantial problems in service delivery well short of established service capacity standards. Currently, P.M. peak period trips are fairly evenly distributed among the four screenlines. Capacity utilization of each screenline is between 62 and 93 percent. Overall, all sub-corridors are currently operating below the level of service standard and have available capacity to accommodate additional passengers.

Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART). BART operates a network of regional rail transit service that includes five rail lines covering a wide area of Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco Counties. The closest BART station to the project site (Powell Station) is located about 0.2 mile north of the project site.

Caltrain. Caltrain is a commuter train that provides service between San Francisco and Gilroy, about 25 miles south of San Jose. The Caltrain station is located about 0.8 mile southeast of the project site at 4th and Townsend.

San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans). SamTrans provides bus transportation between San Francisco and the South Bay. SamTrans routes include stops at the Transbay Terminal (about 0.8 mile northeast of the project site) and along Mission Street.

Golden Gate Transit. Golden Gate Transit provides bus service to the North Bay from the Transbay Terminal, and ferry service to the North Bay from the Ferry Building at The Embarcadero and Market Street.

Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit). Primarily a service provider in the East Bay to communities in western Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, AC Transit also provides express bus service between the East Bay and the Transbay Terminal in downtown San Francisco.

Regional Transit Screenline Analysis. A screenline analysis similar to that described in San Francisco Municipal Railway (Muni), above, was performed for the regional transit carriers (AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, Golden Gate Transit and SamTrans), using three screenlines: East Bay, North Bay, and South Bay. As with the Muni analysis, ridership measured at the three screenlines represents the peak direction of travel and patronage loads, which corresponds with the evening commute in the outbound direction from downtown San Francisco to the region. Capacity utilization was used to determine available space. All regional transit operators base capacity on number of seated passengers, and all except BART use a load factor standard of 100 percent. BART has a three-hour performance standard of 115 percent, which indicates that all seats are full and an additional 15 percent of the seating capacity are standees.

All regional transit providers operate at less than their design capacity, which indicates that seats are generally available. All of the regional transit providers, except for BART, currently operate at a load factor of less than 1.0. BART currently operates at a three-hour load factor of 112 percent, which is slightly less than the standard of 115 percent.

OFF-STREET PARKING

Surveys of the off-street parking supply in the project vicinity were conducted in August 1999 and updated in December 2000, in an area generally bounded by Third Street to the east, Harrison Street to the south, Seventh Street to the west, and Market Street to the north. There are 22 public parking facilities in the study area, providing about 6,127 parking spaces. During the weekday midday period, these facilities operate at an average of 84 percent of capacity. It should be noted that during major events at the Moscone

Center and during the holiday shopping season, parking occupancy is typically 100 percent of most of the nearby parking facilities.

ON-STREET PARKING

In general, on-street parking in the vicinity of the project site is mostly comprised of short-term, metered spaces. In addition, there are yellow loading zones and white passenger loading zones located near businesses. Along several of the nearby streets (including Mission, Howard, and Third Streets), on-street parking is prohibited during the peak periods to provide additional roadway capacity. Adjacent to the project site, on-street parking is provided on Fourth, Fifth, and Howard Streets. It should be noted, however, that on the east side of Fifth Street between Howard and Mission Streets, no on-street parking is provided to allow additional queuing space for access to the Fifth & Mission Garage. In addition, parking is prohibited along portions of Minna Street. Overall, on-street parking is well-utilized (between 90 and 100 percent) throughout the day, with high turnover. Parking occupancy is somewhat lower in the evening and overnight.

PEDESTRIAN CONDITIONS

In general, pedestrian volumes in the vicinity of the project site are relatively high, especially during the midday and evening periods. Pedestrian volumes are the highest along Market and Mission Streets (which have wider sidewalks), and are lower along the streets to the south. Overall, most sidewalks and crosswalks in the area operate with acceptable conditions, with pedestrians typically moving with somewhat restricted walking speeds. During the summer tourist and holiday shopping seasons and major events at Moscone Center, pedestrian volumes are higher, with correspondingly higher pedestrian congestion.

During field visits, it was observed that there is a higher potential for pedestrian/vehicle conflicts during the weekday P.M. peak period at two nearby intersections. At the intersection of Mission and Fourth Streets, there are high volumes of vehicles turning right and left from southbound Fourth Street and turning right from eastbound Mission Street. Turning vehicles must wait for gaps in the pedestrian flows, but the number and duration of gaps are limited due to the high pedestrian volumes. As a result, vehicles often

have difficulty turning and queues can develop at the approaches. At the intersection of Mission and Fifth Streets, there is a free-turn for the northbound right-turn movement, with a small island for pedestrians. With the high volume of traffic using this free turn, pedestrians can have a difficult time crossing between the island and the corner.

Since the time this report was written, the pedestrian facilities have changed. At the intersection of Fourth/Mission, the four crosswalks have recently been widened and a pedestrian countdown signal (a time signal which shows the remaining seconds before signal change) has been installed.

BICYCLE CONDITIONS

In the vicinity of the project site, bicycle facilities have been established on several roadways, including Market Street (#50 – bike route), Howard Street (#30 – wide curb lane bike route), Folsom Street (#30 – bike lane), Fifth Street (#19 – bike route), and Seventh Street (#23 – bike lane). In general, during both the weekday midday and evening periods, bicycle conditions were observed to be operating acceptably, with only minor issues between bicycles, pedestrians and vehicular traffic. However, some conflicts occur along Fourth and Fifth Streets as a result of the vehicles queued to the I-80/U.S. 101 on-ramps. Adjacent to the project site, both Fifth and Howard Streets are part of bicycle routes. The wide curb lane on Howard Street is on the southern side of the street. The San Francisco Bicycle Plan, adopted in 1999, proposed establishment of a number of bicycle lanes in the South of Market area, including Fifth Street between Market and Townsend Streets. Currently, the San Francisco Department of Parking and Traffic is considering establishing both northbound and southbound bicycle lanes on Fifth Street. The potential reconfiguration of the streets to accommodate the bicycle lanes (including the loss of on-street parking and/or vehicular travel lanes) is being evaluated as part of the on-going Fifth & Mission Garage Expansion project.

Significance Criteria

Within San Francisco, the threshold for a significant adverse impact on traffic has been established as the deterioration in level of service at a signalized intersection to LOS E or F, including a deterioration from

LOS D or better to LOS E or F, or from E or F to a worse LOS E or F. In addition, a project would have a significant adverse effect if it would create major traffic hazards, or would contribute considerably to cumulative traffic increases that would cause a deterioration in levels of service to unacceptable levels.

For transit effects, a project would have a significant effect if it would cause a substantial increase in transit demand that cannot be accommodated by existing or proposed transit capacity, resulting in unacceptable levels of transit service. The project would also have a significant effect if, when considering cumulative development in the area, it would contribute substantially to the deterioration of transit service or cause substantial conflict with transit operations.

Regarding parking, it is City policy to emphasize the importance of public transit use and discourage the provision of facilities that encourage automobile use. Therefore, an increase in parking demand generated by a project alone would not be considered a significant environmental impact even if the increased demand cannot be met by existing or proposed parking facilities.

With respect to pedestrian or bicycle impacts, if a project would result in substantial pedestrian overcrowding on public sidewalks or crosswalks, create hazardous conditions for pedestrians or bicyclists, or otherwise substantially interfere with pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, it would be considered to have a significant effect.

Project Impacts

TRAVEL DEMAND

Trip generation rates were based on the San Francisco Planning Department's *Interim Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines (SF Guidelines)*, published in January 2000. Employee, resident, and visitor activity at the proposed project site would generate approximately 4,996 new person trips on a weekday daily basis. Approximately 552 of these trips would be generated during the P.M. peak hour. About 35 percent of the weekday P.M. peak hour person-trips would be inbound to the site and about 65 percent would be outbound.

The 552 peak-hour person-trips were broken down by travel mode. Mode split data for residential uses was based on 1990 U.S. Census journey-to-work data for the census tract containing the project site, and the mode split for the proposed hotel, restaurant, and retail uses was based on mode split information from the *SF Guidelines* for the C-3 district. An average vehicle occupancy, from the *SF Guidelines* or U.S. Census data, was used to convert person-trips by auto into vehicle trips. Of the 552 person-trips generated by the proposed project, approximately 30 percent (168 person trips) would be made by automobile, 44 percent (240 trips) trips would be made by transit, and 26 percent (143 trips) would be made by walking, bicycle, motorcycle, taxi or other modes. The 168 weekday P.M. peak hour auto person-trips would correspond to 115 vehicle trips, of which 30 percent would be inbound to the site and 70 percent would be outbound.

The weekday P.M. peak hour vehicle trips generated by the existing parking facility on the site were not subtracted from project vehicle trip generation, because the existing vehicle trips would remain within the adjacent area and would continue to travel through the study area intersections.

TRIP DISTRIBUTION

Distribution of project-generated trips was based on origin/destination of each trip, separated into the four quadrants of San Francisco (Superdistricts 1 through 4), East Bay, North Bay, South Bay, and Out of Region. Most trips generated by the proposed project would occur within San Francisco, with smaller percentages to and from the other areas. These distribution patterns were then used to assign project-related vehicle trips to local streets, and transit trips to transit operators.

TRAFFIC IMPACTS

The proposed project would generate 34 inbound and 81 outbound vehicle-trips during the weekday P.M. peak hour. To determine the effect of project-generated vehicle trips when added to the existing traffic on local roadways, project-generated traffic was distributed on the local traffic network and then combined with the existing traffic volumes to derive the Existing Plus Project traffic volumes. These volumes were used to derive the Existing Plus Project levels of service presented in Table 2 on page 78. Overall, the addition of project-generated traffic would result in minor increases in the average delay per vehicle at the study intersections, and all intersections would continue to operate at the same service levels as under existing conditions, with the exception of Mission/Fifth, which would worsen from LOS C to LOS D. At

the three study intersections that currently operate at LOS E and F conditions, the proposed project would result in minor changes to the average delay per vehicle. Because the proposed project would not cause the level of service at any of the intersections to deteriorate from Los D or better to LOS E or F, or from LOS E or F to a worse E or F, implementation of the proposed project would not create any significant impacts on traffic conditions in the study area.

TRANSIT IMPACTS

The proposed project would generate 240 transit trips (approximately 70 inbound and 170 outbound) during the weekday P.M. peak hour. These transit trips would use nearby Muni lines and regional transit lines, and may include transfers to other Muni lines or other regional transit lines. Based on the location of the project site and the origin/destination of the residents, employees and visitors of the proposed project, transit trips were assigned to Muni and the various regional transit providers.

Table 2 Intersection Levels of Service Existing and Existing Plus Project Conditions						
Intersection	Existing			Existing Plus Project		
	Delay	LOS	v/c	Delay	LOS	v/c
Market/Fifth	26.0	D	--	26.1	D	--
Market/Fourth	18.0	C	-	18.2	C	-
Mission/Fifth	23.7	C	--	25.7	D	--
Mission/Fourth	20.0	C	--	20.6	C	--
Howard/Sixth	18.2	C	--	18.3	D	--
Howard/Fifth	33.8	D	--	36.3	D	--
Howard/Fourth	38.1	D	--	38.9	D	--
Folsom/Fourth	44.4	E	0.99	45.3	E	1.00
Harrison/Fifth/I-80	29.4	D	--	32.8	D	--
Harrison/Fourth/I-80	>60	F	1.16	>60	F	1.17
Brannan/Sixth/I-280	44.9	E	0.94	45.8	E	0.95

Notes:

Delay presented in seconds per vehicle.

v/c = volume-to-capacity ratio (presented for intersections operating at LOS E or F)

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates, February 2001

Analysis of Muni impacts focused on the increase in transit patronage in the outbound (away from downtown) direction during the weekday P.M. peak hour, as the majority of transit patrons during this time period are traveling away from downtown San Francisco. It was estimated that about 70 percent of the project-generated outbound transit trips would use Muni, and were assigned to the four screenlines and sub-corridors based on the trip distribution patterns. Overall, the addition of the project-generated riders to the screenlines and sub-corridors would not substantially increase the peak hour capacity utilization. Capacity utilization for all screenlines would remain similar to that under existing conditions, and all screenlines and sub-corridors would continue to operate below the Muni capacity utilization standard of 100 percent. The proposed project would create one new driveway on Fifth Street to serve the residential uses, which would generate about 15 weekday P.M. peak hour vehicle trips. This would not substantially affect operations of the three Muni lines that operate on Fifth Street.

Similar to the analysis of Muni impacts, the analysis of regional transit impacts focused on the increase in transit patronage in the outbound direction during the weekday P.M. peak hour, as the majority of transit patrons during this time period are traveling away from San Francisco. Regional trips were assigned to the three regional screenlines based on the origin or destination of each trip. In general, the addition of the project-generated riders would not have a substantial effect on the regional transit providers during the weekday P.M. peak hour, as the capacity utilization for all screenlines would remain the same as under existing conditions. The capacity utilization of all regional transit providers would be under their capacity utilization standards. Although BART to the East Bay would operate at over 120 percent of capacity during the weekday P.M. peak hour, the three-hour load factor would be 112 percent, slightly less than the standard of 115 percent.

PARKING IMPACTS

The proposed project would supply 100 (attendant) parking spaces for the proposed hotel component and 67 self-park spaces for the proposed residential units. In addition, the hotel parking garage and the residential parking garage would each have six bicycle parking spaces (for a total of 12 spaces).

Because the proposed project would be located within the C-3 District of San Francisco, the San Francisco *Planning Code* does not require the provision of off-street parking for any land use except dwelling units, for which one space per four units would be required, or 17 total spaces. Since the proposed project would exceed the *Planning Code* requirement for the residential component of the project, it would need to seek a Conditional Use permit. The proposed parking supply for the hotel component of the proposed project would be within the limits of accessory parking permitted by the *Planning Code*.

Parking demand consists of both long-term demand (including hotel guest, residential and employee parking) and short-term demand (typically visitor and patron parking). The estimated long-term parking demand for the proposed project was based on methodology prescribed in the *SF Guidelines*. The proposed hotel, restaurant, retail, and residential uses would generate a total parking demand of about 288 spaces, of which 272 spaces would be long-term demand and 16 spaces would be short-term demand. Of this demand, 181 spaces would be related to the hotel, 20 would be related to the retail/restaurant, and 87 would be related to the residential units. There would be a shortfall of 81 spaces for the hotel, 20 spaces for the retail/restaurant, and 12 spaces for the residential units.

In addition, the proposed project would result in the elimination of the 100-space surface parking lot on the project site that is currently being used by employees of the adjacent Wells Fargo Data Center. As a result, the vehicles that are parked in this lot would need to find parking at one of the nearby facilities. The overall parking shortfall for the proposed project would be 213 spaces.

The public off-street parking facilities in the vicinity operate at about 84 percent of capacity during the weekday midday (see Off-Street Parking, above), with almost 1,000 parking spaces available during this period (primarily within the adjacent Fifth & Mission Garage). Therefore, there should be sufficient public parking in the nearby vicinity to accommodate the proposed project's parking demand. It should be noted that the peak parking demand for hotel and residential uses typically occurs overnight, during which there would be additional parking spaces available within the public parking facilities and on-street. Overall, the proposed project would not have a significant effect on area-wide parking conditions.

The project sponsor proposes to establish a 60-foot taxi queuing area along the Howard Street frontage of the project site, which would eliminate about three metered parking spaces. It is not anticipated that this would substantially affect area-wide parking conditions.

Although the parking effects of the proposed project would not be considered significant impacts and mitigation measures are not required, the following improvement measures would assist in reducing the potential parking shortfall associated with the proposed project and will be proposed as “Conditions of Approval” for the project:

- The project sponsor would make arrangements at a nearby parking facility to provide a certain number of overnight parking spaces for hotel guests and residents.
- Prospective tenants of the proposed residential units would be informed that the project includes limited parking, and that the City will not implement a Residential Permit Parking program in this commercial area.
- The project sponsor would provide reduced-rate or free transit passes to encourage employees to use alternate means of travel.
- The project sponsor would provide on-site transit information, and provide transit maps and directions at the project’s website (if available).
- The project sponsor has agreed to contribute funding to the new Integrated Transportation Management System (ITMS), and for electronic signage to guide drivers to available parking spaces.

PEDESTRIAN IMPACTS

Pedestrian trips generated by the proposed project would include walk trips to and from the proposed project, plus walk trips to and from nearby parking facilities and transit operators. Overall, the proposed project would generate about 400 pedestrian trips to the surrounding streets during the weekday P.M. peak hour. These pedestrian trips would be entering and exiting the proposed project at the hotel lobby and restaurant entrance on the Howard Street frontage and the residential lobby and retail entrance on the Fifth Street frontage. Adjacent to the project site, the sidewalks on Howard Street would be 12 to 15 feet wide, and the sidewalk on Fifth Street would be 100 feet wide.

The project-generated pedestrian trips would be dispersed throughout the study area, depending on the origin/destination of each trip. It is anticipated that most of the new pedestrian trips during this time period would be to and from the adjacent Moscone West and the major downtown destination areas, such as Market Street and Union Square, and to and from the transit lines on Market Street (Muni, Muni Metro and BART).

Pedestrian conditions in the vicinity of the project site are generally satisfactory, with pedestrians typically moving at somewhat restricted walking speeds. Overall, it is anticipated that the project-generated pedestrian trips could be accommodated within the existing sidewalks and crosswalks adjacent to the project site and would not substantially affect the current pedestrian conditions.

Table 3 presents the actual width and effective width for the north sidewalk of Howard Street and the east sidewalk of Fifth Street, plus the maximum number of pedestrians per hour that could use the sidewalk and maintain a pedestrian level of service of LOS D. During an hour, there could be up to 6,000 pedestrians on Howard Street and 4,300 pedestrians on Fifth Street with acceptable pedestrian operations. Since the proposed project would generate about 400 pedestrian trips during the weekday P.M. peak hour, it would contribute less than 10 percent to the maximum number of pedestrians per hour. As such, it is anticipated that the addition of project-generated pedestrian trips would not substantially affect sidewalk operations.

<p>Table 3 Qualitative Pedestrian Analysis for Howard and Fifth Streets Sidewalks</p>			
Location	Actual Sidewalk Width	Effective Sidewalk Width	Maximum Number of Pedestrians per Hour¹
Howard Street – north	12 feet	7 feet	6,000
Fifth Street – east	10 feet	5 feet	4,300

Note:

¹ To maintain LOS D. Assumes a peak hour factor of 0.95.

Source: *Downtown Streetscape Plan*, Wilbur Smith Associates, July 2001

BICYCLE IMPACTS

The proposed project is within easy bicycling distance of a large portion of San Francisco residents and is located near several Citywide bicycle routes. Some of the “other” trips generated by the proposed project during the weekday P.M. peak hour would be bicycle trips. The proposed project would provide 12 bicycle parking spaces (six within the hotel parking garage and six within the residential parking garage as required by the Planning Code) and showers and lockers (not required in a hotel building). With the current bicycle and traffic volumes on adjacent streets, bicycle travel generally occurs without major impedances or safety problems. The project-generated increase in vehicles in the vicinity of the project site would not be substantial enough to affect bicycle travel in the area. Because the existing wide curb lane for bicycles on Howard Street is on the southern side of the street, project-related vehicles entering and exiting the proposed porte cochere would not affect bicycle operations.

DELIVERY, TOUR BUS, AND PASSENGER LOADING IMPACTS

Delivery, tour bus, and passenger loading for the proposed project would occur within the porte cochere located at the eastern edge of the project site. The porte cochere would be oriented north-south, accessing Howard Street on the south and connecting, via an alley, with Minna Street on the north. The porte cochere would have three travel lanes (one northbound, one southbound, one mixed-flow) plus designated spaces for tour bus loading and passenger loading, and would provide access to the hotel parking garage and three loading docks located west of the porte cochere.

The *Planning Code* would require the project to provide three off-street loading spaces, two for the hotel uses, and one for the residential uses. The three proposed loading docks would fulfill this requirement. Delivery and service vehicle demand was calculated using the methodology presented in the *SF Guidelines*. The proposed project would generate approximately 53 delivery/service vehicle trips per day, mostly generated by the proposed hotel uses. This would correspond to a demand for about 2.5 loading spaces during an average hour and about 3.0 spaces during the peak hour of loading activities. The three proposed loading docks would meet the anticipated demand.

The *Planning Code* would require the project to provide one off-street tour bus loading space. Two tour bus loading spaces would be provided along the eastern edge of the porte cochere, which would meet the tour bus loading requirement. A dedicated walkway would be located adjacent to the tour bus loading space.

Within the porte cochere, there would be space for between three and seven passenger vehicles. It is anticipated that there would be a demand for between 3.5 and 11.5 spaces for peak passenger loading/unloading and the temporary storage of vehicles for valet operations, although the demand for spaces would be lower with effective valet parking operations. The project sponsor also proposes to establish a 60-foot taxi queuing zone on Howard Street, to serve the hotel and restaurant uses. This would require the elimination of three on-street metered parking spaces. (As discussed Parking Impacts, above, elimination of these three spaces would not substantially affect area-wide parking conditions.) The proposed taxi queuing zone could not be used during the weekday evening period (4:00 to 6:00 p.m.) because there is a no-parking restriction on the north curb of Howard Street during this time. The proposed taxi zone, in combination with the spaces within the porte cochere, would provide sufficient space for passenger loading/unloading and valet operations. During the evening peak period taxis would have to use the porte cochere.

Most of the delivery vehicles are anticipated to be small trucks and vans, with some large delivery trucks and tractor-trailers. The smaller delivery vehicles would be able to access the loading docks by driving past and then reversing in. Larger vehicles would need to double park within the porte cochere. According to the project sponsor, it would be possible to schedule deliveries by large vehicles to avoid times of high activity. After making deliveries, trucks would drive on the connecting alley to Minna Street and then access Fourth Street. Due to the relatively tight turning radius, it may be difficult for larger delivery vehicles to turn from the alley onto Minna Street. To improve conditions, it may be possible to remove one or two parking spaces on the south side of Minna Street (directly adjacent to the alley), which would allow trucks to make a wider turn.

If the loading dock, porte cochere, or tour bus loading space is occupied, it may be possible for vehicles to use the 60-foot long taxi queuing zone proposed for the front of the project site on Howard Street.

According to the project sponsor, trash containers would be rolled from the trash room to the loading dock on solid waste collection days. The trucks would be directed to drive into the porte cochere, load the trash containers, and then exit to Minna Street or turn around and exit to Fifth Street.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Project construction is expected to take about 25 months, with staging of most construction equipment and materials occurring within the project site and on the adjacent sidewalks on Fifth and Howard Streets. To accommodate construction staging and to provide a temporary pedestrian walkway, the parking lane along Fifth and Howard Streets would be closed throughout the construction period. The closure of the parking lane on Howard Street would result in the temporary elimination of the additional weekday P.M. peak period travel lane at this location.

It is anticipated that no regular traffic lanes would need to be closed during construction. However, if it is determined that temporary traffic lane closures would be needed, the closures would be coordinated with the City in order to minimize the impacts on local traffic. In general, lane and sidewalk closures are subject to review and approval by the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Interdepartmental Staff Committees on Traffic and Transportation (ISCOTT). It is anticipated that no Muni bus stops would need to be relocated during construction. However, if it is determined that temporary Muni bus stop relocation would be needed, the relocations would be coordinated with Muni's Street Operations/Special Events office.

Throughout the construction period, there would be a flow of construction-related trucks into and out of the site. The impact of construction truck traffic would be a temporary lessening of the capacities of local streets due to the slower movement and larger turning radii of trucks, which may affect both traffic and Muni operations. There would be an average of 20 to 100 construction trucks per day, depending on the phase, and a maximum of 12 trucks per hour. It is anticipated that a majority of the construction-related truck traffic would use I-80/U.S. 101 or Third Street to travel to and from the project site. To access the project site from I-80/U.S. 101, trucks would use the nearby off-ramps at Fourth/Bryant and

Fifth/Harrison, and travel on Third or Fifth Street to Howard Street. To return to I-80/U.S. 101, trucks would travel on Fourth or Fifth Streets, and use the nearby on-ramps at Fifth/Bryant and Fourth/Harrison.

On average, there would be between 30 and 200 construction workers per day at the project site, depending on the phase. Trip distribution and mode split data are not available for the construction workers. It is anticipated that the addition of worker-related vehicle or transit trips would not substantially affect the transportation conditions, as any impacts on the vehicle or transit network would be similar to, or less than, those of the proposed project. Construction workers would generate a temporary parking demand. Since the nearby parking facilities currently have availability during the day, it is anticipated that construction worker parking demand could be accommodated without substantially affecting area-wide parking conditions. Construction workers would be able to park within the proposed project's parking facilities after their construction (by the tenth month).

Although the traffic and parking effects of construction would generally not be considered significant impacts as they are temporary and mitigation measures are not required, the following improvement measures would assist in minimizing construction impacts and will be recommended as conditions of approval:

- Limiting truck movements to the hours between 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (or other times, if approved by the Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT)), would minimize disruption of the general traffic flow on adjacent streets during the A.M. and P.M. peak periods.
- To improve operating conditions, the project sponsor and construction contractor(s) would meet with the traffic Engineering Division of the Department of Parking and Traffic, the Fire Department, Muni, and the Planning Department to determine feasible measures to reduce traffic congestion, including disruption and pedestrian circulation conditions.
- To accommodate the temporary parking demand of construction workers, the project sponsor could make arrangements at parking facilities in the area.
- Coordination of project construction activities with those of the adjacent Moscone West expansion and Emporium Site Hotel project would minimize the impacts of combined construction traffic.

• Revised Project

Overall, the weekday daily and weekday PM peak hour trip generation would be similar for both projects (see Table B, below). The revised proposed project would generate more person-trips than the original proposed project on a daily basis – 5,102 person-trips as compared to 4,996 person-trips. However, the revised proposed project would generate fewer person-trips than the original proposed project during the weekday PM peak hour – 516 person-trips as compared to 552 person-trips.

Table B Person-Trip Generation Comparison				
Land Use	Proposed Project		Revised Project	
	Daily Person-Trips	PM Peak Hour Person-Trips	Daily Person-Trips	PM Peak Hour Person-Trips
Hotel	3,460	329	4,152	394
Restaurant	800	108	800	108
Retail	150	14	150	14
Residential	586	101	0	0
Total	4,996	551	5,102	516

Source: *SF Guidelines, Citywide Travel Behavior Survey*, Wilbur Smith Associates – November 2001

During the weekday PM peak hour, the original proposed project and the revised proposed project would generate similar volumes of auto, transit and walk/other person-trips (as shown in Tables C and D on the following page). In addition, both the original proposed project and the revised proposed project would generate 115 vehicle-trips during the weekday PM peak hour. The percentage of inbound and outbound vehicle-trips would be similar for the original proposed project and the revised proposed project.

Intersection Operating Conditions

With the original proposed project, the driveway for the hotel parking garage would be accessed from Howard Street and the driveway for the residential garage would be accessed from Fifth Street. Since the revised proposed project would eliminate the residential uses, the former residential parking spaces would be converted to hotel parking and would be accessed via the hotel garage. The reassignment of some

vehicle-trips from Fifth Street to Howard Street would not substantially change the turning movement volumes at the study intersections.

Table C Proposed Project Trip Generation by Mode Weekday PM Peak Hour					
Land Use	Person-Trips				Vehicle Trips
	Auto	Transit	Walk/Other ¹	Total	
Hotel	108	151	70	329	76
Restaurant	39	31	38	108	22
Retail	4	2	8	14	2
Residential	17	56	27	100	15
Total	168	240	143	551	115

Source: *SF Guidelines*, 1990 U.S. Census, Wilbur Smith Associates – April 2001

Notes:

¹ "Other" mode includes bicycles, motorcycles, and taxis.

Table D Revised Project Trip Generation by Mode Weekday PM Peak Hour					
Land Use	Person-Trips				Vehicle Trips
	Auto	Transit	Walk/Other ¹	Total	
Hotel	130	182	82	394	92
Restaurant	39	31	38	108	22
Retail	4	2	8	14	2
Total	173	215	128	516	115

Source: *SF Guidelines*, 1990 U.S. Census, Wilbur Smith Associates – November 2001

Notes:

¹ "Other" mode includes bicycles, motorcycles, and taxis.

Under the Existing plus Proposed Project conditions, all 11 study intersections operated at similar service levels to Existing conditions, and no intersections were determined to worsen to unacceptable conditions. Since the revised proposed project would generate the same number of vehicle-trips as the original

proposed project during the weekday PM peak hour, it is anticipated that the Existing plus Project operation conditions at the study intersections would be similar for both the original proposed project and the revised proposed project.

The revised proposed project would not create any significant impacts on traffic conditions in the study area under the existing plus project conditions.

Parking Conditions

The revised proposed project would have a smaller parking demand than the original proposed project – 237 spaces compared to 288 spaces. The revised proposed project would provide fewer parking spaces than the original proposed project – 115 valet parking spaces as compared to 167 parking spaces with the original proposed project. The revised proposed project would have a parking shortfall of 122 spaces (in addition to the 100-space parking lot that would be displaced with construction of either the original proposed project and the revised proposed project). Since the original proposed project would have a parking shortfall of 113 spaces, the revised proposed project would have a similar effect on area-wide parking conditions as the original proposed project and it would not be considered to be a significant impact.

Service/Delivery Vehicles and Loading Space Demand

The revised proposed project would generate an additional four service/delivery vehicles than the original proposed project– 57 trips as compared to 53 trips. The revised proposed project, however, would continue to have a demand for three loading docks during both the average and peak hours of loading activity. As such, the proposed loading dock supply of three spaces for the revised proposed project would meet demand.

2015 Cumulative Conditions

Under year 2015 cumulative conditions, nine of the eleven study intersections would operate at LOS E or F during the weekday P.M. peak hour, while the intersections of Market/Fourth and Howard/Sixth would operate at LOS D, as shown in Table 4, page 88. These poor conditions would be the direct result of the anticipated general growth in traffic volumes in the area. The increase in traffic volumes towards the regional freeway network, particularly southbound on Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Streets, would result in substantial delays along these roadways and a potential increase in queuing at the freeway on-ramps. Overall, the proposed project would contribute between 0.2 and 2.3 percent of the total 2015 cumulative traffic volumes during the weekday P.M. peak hour, as shown in Table 5, page 88. The proposed project would contribute between 1.4 percent and 14.7 percent of the growth in cumulative volumes over existing conditions. The proposed project would contribute more than five percent of the growth in cumulative volumes at three intersections: Howard/Fourth (6.1 percent), Howard/Fifth (14.7 percent), and Harrison/Fifth (5.5 percent). The proposed project's contribution to the cumulative traffic growth at the intersections of Howard/Fifth and Harrison/Fifth Streets would be considered a significant cumulative impact. Since most of the proposed project's contribution to the intersection at Mission/Fourth Streets would be in the non-critical direction, the effect to this intersection would not be considered significant.

Between existing and 2015 cumulative conditions, the demand for Muni ridership is projected to increase by over 11,000 passengers at the four screenlines during the weekday P.M. peak hour (including project-generated trips), while Muni capacity is projected to increase by about 4,800 passengers. It is anticipated that Muni would operate at approximately 105 percent of capacity during the weekday P.M. peak hour, and ridership is expected to approach or exceed capacity on most screenlines and sub-corridors. The approximately 100 project-generated trips that would cross the Muni screenlines would have a minimal contribution to cumulative transit ridership, and alone would not substantially affect the peak hour capacity utilization of each screenline. The demand for regional transit service is also anticipated to increase substantially. Projected ridership at the East Bay screenline is expected to exceed capacity, while the North Bay and South Bay screenlines would operate at less than 100 percent of capacity. The proposed project would have a minimal contribution to the cumulative regional transit ridership, and alone would not substantially affect the peak hour capacity utilization of each screenline.

Table 4
Intersection Levels of Service
Existing and 2015 Cumulative Conditions

Intersection	Existing			Cumulative 2015		
	Delay	LOS	v/c	Delay	LOS	v/c
Market/Fifth	26.0	D	--	55.8	E	1.02
Market/Fourth	18.0	C	--	38.2	D	--
Mission/Fifth	23.7	C	--	>60	F	1.00
Mission/Fourth	20.0	C	--	47.8	E	0.90
Howard/Sixth	18.2	C	--	38.2	D	--
Howard/Fifth	33.8	D	--	>60	F	1.19
Howard/Fourth	38.1	D	--	>60	F	1.12
Folsom/Fourth	44.4	E	0.99	>60	F	1.14
Harrison/Fifth/I-80	29.4	D	--	>60	F	1.09
Harrison/Fourth/I-80	>60	F	1.16	>60	F	1.33
Brannan/Sixth/I-280	44.9	E	0.94	>60	F	1.08

Notes:

Delay presented in seconds per vehicle.

v/c = volume-to-capacity ratio (presented for intersections operating at LOS E or F)

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates, February 2001

Table 5
Proposed Project's Contribution to Traffic Volumes

Intersection	Existing Volume	Project Volume	2015 Cumulative Volume	Contribution to Total 2015 Cumulative Volume	Contribution to Growth in Volumes
Market/Fifth	2,260	5	2,629	0.2%	1.4%
Market/Fourth	2,001	7	2,329	0.3%	2.1%
Mission/Fifth	3,167	18	3,693	0.5%	3.4%
Mission/Fourth	2,779	20	3,246	0.6%	4.3%
Howard/Sixth	3,840	31	4,489	0.7%	4.8%
Howard/Fifth	3,144	87	3,737	2.3%	14.7%
Howard/Fourth	3,424	36	4,102	0.9%	6.1%
Folsom/Fourth	3,308	24	3,865	0.6%	4.3%
Harrison/Fifth/I-80	3,318	31	3,884	0.8%	5.5%
Harrison/Fourth/I-80	4,102	17	4,779	0.4%	2.5%
Brannan/Sixth/I-280	6,158	19	7,168	0.3%	1.9%

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates, February 2001

• Revised Project

Since the revised proposed project would contribute the same amount of traffic to the cumulative volume as the proposed project, it would also have a significant cumulative impact at the Howard/Fifth and Harrison/Fifth intersections. The proposed revised project would contribute 6.1 percent to the cumulative growth at Howard/Fourth, however, since most of the contribution would be to the non-critical direction, the effect would not be considered significant.

NOTES - Transportation

¹ Wilbur Smith Associates, *888 Howard Street Transportation Study, Case No. 2000.790E*, August 1, 2001. This report is available for review in file No. 2000.790 at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor

E. AIR QUALITY

Setting

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) operates a regional monitoring network that measures the ambient concentrations of six air pollutants (the "criteria pollutants"): ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), fine particulate matter (PM₁₀), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and sulfur dioxide (SO₂)

The federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act of 1988 require that the State Air Resources Board, based on air quality monitoring data, designate portions of the state where the federal or state ambient air quality standards are not met as "non-attainment areas." Because of the differences between the national and state standards, the designation of nonattainment areas is different under the federal and state legislation. On the basis of the monitoring data, the Bay Area had been designated a "non-attainment" area with respect to the Federal O₃ and CO standards. The air basin is an attainment area or is unclassified for all other national ambient air quality standards.

Under the California Clean Air Act, the entire San Francisco Bay Air Basin is a nonattainment area for ozone and PM_{10} . The air basin is either in attainment or unclassified for other pollutants under state standards. In addition, San Francisco has experienced violations of the state PM_{10} standards.

A four-year (1997 to 2000) summary of data collected at the BAAQMD monitoring station at 10 Arkansas Street (a little more than a mile south of the project site) indicated that there were no violations of either the one-hour or eight-hour CO standards, or the standards for ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide or

lead. The state PM_{10} standard was exceeded on 0 to 6 days each year during the four-year period of 1997-2000 (see Appendix D).

Data from air quality monitoring in San Francisco show that there have been violations of the state (but not federal) fine particulate standards. CO is a non-reactive air pollutant, the major source of which is motor vehicles. CO concentrations are generally highest during periods of peak traffic congestion. Particulate levels are relatively low near the coast and increase with distance from the coast, peaking in dry, sheltered valleys. The primary sources of particulates in San Francisco are construction and demolition, combustion of fuels for heating, and vehicle travel over paved roads.¹

San Francisco, like all other sub-regions in the Bay Area, contributes to regional air quality problems, primarily O_3 , in other parts of the Bay Area. Ozone is not emitted directly from air pollutant sources, but is produced in the atmosphere over time and distance through a complex series of photochemical reactions involving hydrocarbons (HC) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x), which are carried downwind as the photochemical reactions occur. Ozone standards are violated most often in the Santa Clara, Livermore and Diablo Valleys, because local topography and meteorological conditions favor the build-up of ozone precursors there.

In 1999, emissions from motor vehicles were the source of 70 percent of the CO, 41 percent of the HCs, 72 percent of the PM_{10} , 89 percent of the sulfur oxides and 53 percent of the NO_x emitted in San Francisco.²

The Bay Area has both a federal and state air quality plan. Both plans propose the imposition of controls on stationary sources (factories, power plants, industrial sources, etc.) and Transportation Control Measures designed to reduce emissions from automobiles.

Significance Criteria

A project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to air quality if it would violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The BAAQMD specifies the

significance criteria as follows:³ (1) the project impacts would be considered significant if they cause operation-related emissions equal to or exceeding an established threshold of 80 pounds per day of ROG, NO_x, or PM₁₀, or cause CO concentrations above the state ambient air quality standard; (2) the project impacts would also be considered to have a significant contribution to cumulative regional air quality effects if the project impacts exceed these standards. If project air quality impacts would not exceed the BAAQMD thresholds, the project still may be found to contribute to significant cumulative air quality impacts if the project is inconsistent with the local general plan's air quality element.⁴

Impacts

Air quality impacts from land development projects result from project construction and operation. Construction emissions, primarily dust generated by earthmoving activities and criteria air pollutants emitted by construction vehicles, would have a short-term effect on air quality. Operational emissions, generated by project-related traffic and by combustion of natural gas for building space and water heating, would continue to affect air quality throughout the lifetime of the project.

OPERATIONS EMISSIONS

Project operation would affect local air quality by increasing the number of vehicles on project-impacted roads and at the project site, and by introducing stationary emissions to the project site. Transportation sources, such as project-generated vehicles, would account for over 90 percent of operational project-related emissions. Stationary source emissions, generated by combustion of natural gas for building space and water heating, would be less-than-significant.

REGIONAL IMPACTS

Project traffic would also have an effect on air quality outside the project vicinity. Trips to and from the project would result in air pollutant emissions over the entire Bay Area. To evaluate emissions associated with the project, the URBEMIS-7G computer program was employed. The daily increases in regional emissions from auto travel are shown in Table 6 on page 92 for reactive hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen (two precursors of ozone), and PM₁₀ (particulate matter, 10 micron). Emissions are below the applicable thresholds, so project impacts on regional emissions would be less than significant.

Table 6 Project Regional Emissions in Pounds Per Day*			
	Reactive Hydrocarbons	Nitrogen Oxides	PM ₁₀
Project Daily Emission	31.6	33.9	11.4
BAAQMD Threshold	80.0	80.0	80.0

- * Estimates of regional emissions generated by project traffic were made using a program called URBEMIS-7G. Inputs to the URBEMIS-7G program include trip generation rates, vehicle mix, average trip length by trip type and average speed. Trip generation rates for project land uses were provided by the project transportation consultant. Average trip lengths and vehicle mixes for the Bay Area were used. Average speed for all types of trips was assumed to be 25 MPH. The analysis assumed a year 2001 vehicle mix. The URBEMIS-7G runs assumed summertime conditions for ROG, NO_x and PM₁₀.

Source: Don Ballanti, Certified Consulting Meteorologist.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District has identified three criteria that would require the estimation of local carbon monoxide concentrations:

- Project vehicle emissions would exceed 550 pounds per day
- Project traffic would impact intersections or roadway links operating at Level of Service (LOS) D, E or F or would cause LOS to decline to D, E or F
- Project traffic would increase traffic volumes on nearby roadways by 10 percent or more

A computer program, the URBEMIS-7G, developed by the California Air Resources Board, was applied to project daily trip generation under winter conditions to estimate total project-related carbon monoxide emissions. The resulting calculated emission of 265 pounds/day of carbon monoxide from project-generated vehicles would not exceed the BAAQMD threshold of significance of 550 pounds/day. Because project traffic would contribute to the traffic delays at intersections currently operating at LOS D, E or F, carbon monoxide concentrations at eight intersections, all operating at LOS D or worse, were estimated using a computer model developed by the California Department of Transportation, CALINE-4.

Table 7 below shows predicted 1-hour and 8-hour averaged carbon monoxide concentrations at the eight intersections that meet the BAAQMD criteria for modeling. For these intersections the estimated carbon monoxide concentrations with project-generated traffic would be below the applicable state/federal standards (20 parts per million [ppm] for the 1-hour standard and 9 ppm for the 8-hour standard), and hence, a less-than-significant impact.

Table 7 Existing and Projected Curbside Carbon Monoxide Concentrations at Selected Intersections*				
Intersection	Without Project (2001)		With Project (2001)	
	1-Hour	8-Hour	1-Hour	8-Hour
Market Street/Fifth Street	7.7	5.2	7.7	5.2
Mission Street/Fifth Street	8.1	5.5	8.1	5.5
Howard Street/Fifth Street	8.0	5.4	8.1	5.5
Howard Street/Fourth Street	8.3	5.6	8.3	5.6
Folsom Street/Fourth Street	8.0	5.4	8.0	5.4
Harrison Street /Fourth Street	8.6	5.9	8.6	5.9
Harrison Street/Fifth Street	7.8	5.3	7.8	5.3
Brannan Street/Sixth Street	11.0	7.5	11.0	7.5
Most Stringent Standard	20.0	9.0	20.0	9.0

- * Calculations were made using a screening procedure contained in the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*. Background concentrations of 6.4 ppm (1-hour) and 4.3 ppm (8-hour) were calculated using 1992 isopleths of carbon monoxide concentration and rollback factors developed by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The one-hour State standard is 20 ppm, the one-hour federal standard is 35 ppm, and the eight-hour State and federal standards are 9 ppm. Emission factors were derived from the California Air Resources Board EMFAC7G computer model (Version 1.0c).

Source: Don Ballanti, Certified Consulting Meteorologist.

NOTES — Air Quality

¹ Bay Area Air Quality Management District, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines, Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plans*, April 1996 (revised December 1999).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., Section 2.3.

⁴ Ibid., page 18.

F. GROWTH INDUCEMENT

In general, a project would be considered growth-inducing if its implementation would result in substantial population increases and/or new development that might not occur if the project were not approved and implemented. The proposed project would replace an existing surface parking lot with a mixed use building containing hotel, residential, and retail uses. This would intensify the use of the site, but would not be expected to substantially alter development patterns in the South of Market area or elsewhere in San Francisco. The project site is in an urbanized area that is intensively developed and that already supports substantial amounts of hotel, residential, cultural, and commercial development in surrounding blocks

The addition of 67 residential units, 1,000 square feet of retail space, and 500 hotel rooms would increase the daily population on the project site by approximately 1,271 people. This daily population would consist of approximately 503 employees, 676 guests, and 92 residents. It is anticipated that some of the new residents would relocate from elsewhere in the City and would not represent new residents to the City, while other residents would come from outside San Francisco. Similarly, some of the 503 project employees would already reside in San Francisco, while some employees from outside the City may seek housing within the City boundaries.

The number of on-site residents and employees relocating from outside San Francisco would be small in proportion to San Francisco's population, and would not represent a substantial growth in population or concentration in the neighborhood, City, or region.

The proposed project is located in an urban area and would not necessitate or induce the extension of municipal infrastructure. In view of the above, there is no evidence to suggest that the project would result in additional development in the project site vicinity that would not otherwise occur.

IV. MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE THE POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

Preliminary review during the preparation of the Initial Study for the proposed project identified a number of potential impacts that could be minimized or eliminated through implementation of one or more mitigation measures. To facilitate project approval and minimize potential impacts, the project sponsor has incorporated those previously identified mitigation measures into the project; they would be implemented during the course of project construction or operation, as appropriate. In addition, in the course of environmental review conducted during preparation of this EIR, further measures were identified to reduce or eliminate identified impacts of the proposed project. Each of the mitigation measures, both those identified in the Initial Study and subsequently incorporated into the project and those recommended by this EIR, are listed below.

Existing City, State, and federal regulations require a variety of protective and other measures that would also serve to mitigate potential project impacts. These measures are not identified in this chapter, rather, they are assumed to constitute part of the project, and compliance with the measures would be monitored by the appropriate regulatory agency. City-mandated controls on the project would include a limitation on construction noise (San Francisco Noise Ordinance, Article 29 of the San Francisco Police Code, 1972), a prohibition on the use of mirrored glass on the building (City Planning Commission Resolution No. 9212); protective measures against lead-based paint exposure (Chapter 36 of the San Francisco Building Code, Work Practices for Exterior Lead-Based Paint) and the requirement for street trees (Planning Code, Section 143). The project sponsor and construction contractors would also be required to observe all State and federal OSHA safety requirements related to handling and disposal of other hazardous materials, such as asbestos.

The mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study and this EIR follow. Those measures with an asterisk (*) are from the Initial Study (see Appendix A) and are proposed to be included as a part of the project.

MEASURES THAT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED BY PUBLIC AGENCIES

A. Transportation

The project sponsor has agreed to make a \$50,000 contribution to the Department of Parking and Traffic's Integrated Transportation Management System (ITMS) program. The new San Francisco ITMS program is a City-wide real-time electronic transportation management system that will install various Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) infrastructure components to improve traffic circulation within the City. The South of Market area would be the first phase of the system that would be implemented. This program will monitor and manage traffic by receiving real-time information at the Traffic Management Center via closed circuit TV cameras.

The implementation of the ITMS program will improve overall traffic conditions and reduce traffic congestion in the City. Although the implementation of ITMS may not directly mitigate the significant impacts of the proposed project under cumulative conditions, this program would result in overall traffic improvements and lessening of congestion, and would facilitate circulation in the South of Market area, where the proposed project is located.

MEASURES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

B. Construction Air Quality *

The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to spray the project site with water during excavation, grading, and site preparation activities; spray unpaved construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other such material; cover trucks hauling debris, soils, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during these periods at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

The project sponsor shall require the project contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as prohibiting idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementing specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

C. Hazards

1. UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS *

The project sponsor shall conduct an Underground Storage Tank (UST) scan by magnetometer to determine if abandoned USTs or piping exist on the site. If any are found, they shall be removed in accordance with regulatory requirements, and surrounding soils shall be tested. Any soil found to be contaminated at or above potentially hazardous levels shall be handled and disposed in accordance with Mitigation Measure C2, below.

2. CONTAMINATED SOIL *

Step 1: Preparation of Site Mitigation Plan

If, based on the results of the soil tests conducted, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the DPH shall determine if preparation of a Site Mitigation Plan (SMP) is warranted. If such a plan is requested by the DPH, the SMP shall include a discussion of the level of contamination of soils on the project site and mitigation measures for managing contaminated soils on the site, including, but not limited to: 1) the alternatives for managing contaminated soils on the site (e.g., encapsulation, partial or complete removal, treatment, recycling for reuse, or a combination); 2) the preferred alternative for managing contaminated soils on the site and a brief justification; and 3) the specific practices to be used to handle, haul, and dispose of contaminated soils on the site. The SMP shall be submitted to the DPH for review and approval. A copy of the SMP shall be submitted to the Planning Department to become part of the case file.

Step 2: Handling, Hauling, and Disposal of Contaminated Soils

(a) specific work practices: If based on the results of the soil tests conducted, DPH determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the construction contractor shall be alert for the presence of such soils during excavation and other construction activities on the site (detected through soil odor, color, and texture and results of on-site soil testing), and shall be prepared to handle, profile (i.e., characterize), and dispose of such soils appropriately (i.e., as dictated by local, state, and federal regulations, including OSHA lead-safe work practices) when such soils are encountered on the site.

(b) dust suppression: Soils exposed during excavation for site preparation and project construction activities shall be kept moist throughout the time they are exposed, both during and after work hours.

(c) surface water runoff control: Where soils are stockpiled, visqueen shall be used to create an impermeable liner, both beneath and on top of the soils, with a berm to contain any potential surface water runoff from the soil stockpiles during inclement weather.

(d) soils replacement: If necessary, clean fill or other suitable material(s) shall be used to bring portions of the project site, where contaminated soils have been excavated and removed, up to construction grade.

(e) hauling and disposal: Contaminated soils shall be hauled off the project site by waste hauling trucks appropriately certified with the State of California and adequately covered to prevent dispersion of the soils during transit, and shall be disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste disposal facility registered with the State of California.

Step 3: Preparation of Closure/Certification Report

After excavation and foundation construction activities are completed, the project sponsor shall prepare and submit a closure/certification report to DPH for review and approval. The closure/certification report shall include the mitigation measures in the SMP for handling and removing contaminated soils from the project site, whether the construction contractor modified any of these mitigation measures, and how and why the construction contractor modified those mitigation measures.

D. Cultural Resources *

The project sponsor shall retain the services of an archaeologist. During removal of structures, paving, and any buried foundation materials found on the site, the archaeologist shall carry out a pre-excavation testing program to better determine the probability of finding archaeological remains on the site. The testing program shall consist of a series of mechanical, exploratory borings or trenches and/or other testing methods determined to be appropriate by the archaeologist.

If, after testing, the archaeologist determines that no further investigations or precautions are necessary to safeguard potentially significant archaeological resources, the archaeologist shall submit a written report to the Environmental Review Officer (ERO), with a copy to the project sponsor. If the archaeologist determines that further investigations or precautions are necessary, he/she shall consult with the ERO, and they shall jointly determine what additional procedures are necessary to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources.

These additional mitigation measures shall be implemented by the project sponsor and might include a program of on-site monitoring of all pile driving and any site excavation that may be necessary, during which the archaeologist shall record observations in a permanent log. Whether or not there are archaeological finds of significance, the archaeologist shall prepare a written report on the monitoring program that shall be submitted first and directly to the ERO, with a copy to the project sponsor. During the monitoring program, the project sponsor shall designate one individual on site as her/her representative. This representative shall have the authority to suspend work at the site to give the archaeologist time to investigate and evaluate archaeological resources should they be encountered.

Should evidence of cultural resources of potential significance be found during the monitoring program, the archaeologist shall immediately notify the ERO, and the project sponsor shall halt any activities which the archaeologist and the ERO jointly determine could damage such cultural resources. Ground disturbing activities which might damage cultural resources would be suspended for a total maximum of four weeks over the course of construction.

After notifying the ERO, the archaeologist shall prepare a written report to be submitted first and directly to the ERO, with a copy to the project sponsor, which shall contain an assessment of the potential significance of the archaeological finds and recommendations for what measures should be implemented to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources. Based on this report, the ERO shall recommend specific additional mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor. These additional mitigation measures might include a site security program, additional on-site investigations by the archaeologist, and/or documentation, preservation, and recovery of archival material.

Finally, the archaeologist shall prepare a report documenting the archaeological resources that were discovered, an evaluation as to their significance, and a description as to how any archaeological testing, exploration, and/or recovery program was conducted.

Copies of all draft reports prepared according to this mitigation measure shall be sent first and directly to the ERO for review. Following approval by the ERO, copies of the final report shall be sent to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey, Northwest Information Center. Three copies of the final report shall be submitted to the Office of Major Environmental Analysis, accompanied by copies of the transmittals documenting distribution to the Present of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey, Northwest Information Center.

V. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED

In accordance with Section 21100(b)(2)(A) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and with Section 15126.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this chapter is to identify environmental impacts that could not be eliminated or reduced to an insignificant level by mitigation measures included as part of the proposed project, or by other mitigation measures that could be implemented, as described in Chapter IV, Mitigation Measures, pages 96 through 100. This chapter is subject to final determination by the City Planning Commission as part of their certification of the EIR. The Final EIR will be revised, if necessary, to reflect the findings of the Commission.

The proposed project, with mitigation, would have the following unavoidable significant cumulative impact in the area of traffic:

- The proposed project would make a considerable contribution to growth in cumulative traffic volumes at two intersections: Howard/Fifth (14.7 percent), and Harrison/Fifth (5.5 percent).

With implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in Chapter IV, Mitigation Measures, of this report, all other potential significant impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. The project sponsor has agreed to implement all measures in Chapter IV (except for those requiring public agency responsibility) in an agreement dated August 3, 2001.¹

¹ This mitigation agreement form is available for public review at the San Francisco Planning Department, 1600 Mission Street, fifth floor, in Case File No. 2000.790E.

VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

This chapter identifies alternatives to the proposed project and discusses environmental impacts associated with each alternative. Project decision-makers could adopt any of the following alternatives instead of the proposed project, if an alternative would reduce or eliminate significant environmental impacts of the proposed project and is determined to be feasible and would attain most of the basic objectives of the project. This determination of feasibility will be made by project decision-makers on the basis of substantial evidence in the record which shall include, but not be limited to, information presented in this EIR and in comments received on the Draft EIR.

Alternatives were selected that would reduce identified impacts of the proposed project. The following alternatives are evaluated: a No-Project Alternative, a Code-Compliant Alternative, and a Hotel-Only Alternative. The Code Compliant Alternative would consist of a smaller building, occupied by a hotel, that would comply with existing zoning, height, bulk, and FAR restrictions, including the 160-foot height limit. The Hotel-Only Alternative would consist of a building the same size as the proposed project occupied solely by hotel uses, with no residential uses. Other alternatives, with a variety of building configurations, could also be considered by decision-makers as these other alternatives would be "bracketed" by the range of alternatives described herein.

Whether property is owned or can reasonably be acquired by the project sponsor has a strong bearing on the feasibility of developing a project alternative at a different site. No viable alternative sites have been identified within San Francisco where the proposed project could be constructed and meet the project sponsor's objectives. A similar-sized project within the downtown area would have similar cumulative effects.

ALTERNATIVE A: NO PROJECT

Description

This alternative would entail no change to the existing parking uses on the site. The proposed project would not be built. However, this alternative would not preclude future proposals for redevelopment of the project site.

Impacts

If the No-Project Alternative were implemented, none of the impacts associated with the proposed project would occur. The effects of the proposed 39-story project on visual quality and urban design would not occur, nor would there be the wind, shadow and air quality impacts of the proposed project. There would be no project-specific transportation effects, including the contribution to the cumulative growth of traffic at the intersections of Howard/Fourth, Mission/Fourth, and Howard/Fifth, which would be a significant impact of the proposed project. Other less-than-significant effects described in the Initial Study, including generation of noise during construction, potential discovery of subsurface cultural resources during excavation, and potentially hazardous materials, among other impacts, would not occur with this alternative.

The No Project Alternative would not meet the project sponsor's objectives of developing market rate condominiums and a first class hotel with meeting room space, accessible to the retail and commercial center of the City and able to serve the Yerba Buena Area and the Moscone Convention Center.

If this alternative is selected by the San Francisco Planning Commission and a different proposal is submitted at a later date for development of all or part of the project site, that proposal would be subject to a separate project-specific environmental review under the requirements of CEQA.

ALTERNATIVE B: CODE-COMPLIANT ALTERNATIVE

Description

Alternative B would entail either a mixed-use (Alternative B-1) or a hotel-only (Alternative B-2) project that complies with existing zoning, height, bulk, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) restrictions. These alternatives would be 160 feet and 16 stories high, in compliance with the existing height restriction, and would involve a lower of intensity of uses than the proposed project, as shown in Figures 28 through 32, pages 105 through 109. For Alternative B-1, the upper 14 stories would contain approximately 225 hotel rooms. The first two floors would contain a restaurant, approximately 1,000 square feet of retail space (the same as the proposed project), and approximately 15,000 square feet of meeting space (compared to approximately 40,200 square feet in the proposed project). The space devoted to other hotel amenities such as the health club and spa would also be less than in the proposed project. There would be no residential uses in this alternative. A variant of this alternative (Alternative B-2) would omit the restaurant and retail uses and would use the ground floor space for lobby.

Impacts

Compared to the proposed project, Alternatives B-1 and B-2: Code-Compliant Alternatives, because of their smaller size would have less intensive environmental effects on visual quality and urban design, transportation and parking, population, shadows, construction noise, air quality, utilities and public services, and energy/natural resources. In those environmental areas not governed by height or bulk, this alternative would have similar effects on land use, operation noise, biology, geology/topography, water, hazards, and cultural resources.

In the Code-Compliant Alternative B-1, the building would have a similar design and visual character as the proposed project, but would be substantially lower as shown in the photomontages. The visual impacts of this alternative, during both day- and nighttime, would be correspondingly reduced.

The Code-Compliant Alternative B-1 would result in fewer vehicle and transit trips than the proposed project. The impacts of both the proposed project and this alternative on intersection levels of service,



Photomontage



Site Photo

Source: Square One Productions

ALTERNATIVE B, VIEW LOOKING NORTH ON FIFTH STREET AT FOLSOM FIGURE 28



Site Photo

Source: Square One Productions



Photomontage

ATERNATIVE B, VIEW LOOKING SOUTH ON FIFTH STREET AT MARKET FIGURE 29

Site Photo



Photomontage



Source: Square One Productions

ALTERNATIVE B, VIEW LOOKING WEST ON HOWARD STREET FIGURE 30

Site Photo



Photomontage



Source: Square One Productions

ALTERNATIVE B, VIEW LOOKING NORTH ON HIGHWAY 280 **FIGURE 31**

Site Photo



Photomontage



Source: Square One Productions

ALTERNATIVE B, VIEW LOOKING NORTH ON HIGHWAY 80 **FIGURE 32**

transit, parking, pedestrians, bicycles, construction traffic, and contribution to total cumulative traffic volumes would be less than significant. This alternative would make a smaller contribution to the growth in cumulative traffic impacts at nearby intersections than would the proposed project. The Code-Compliant Alternative would contribute less-than-considerable growth in cumulative volumes at all study intersections except Howard/Fifth, where this alternative would contribute approximately seven percent of the growth in cumulative volume, which would be a significant impact. In comparison, the proposed project would contribute more than considerable growth in cumulative volumes at three intersections, including Howard/Fifth.

This alternative would be less than half the height of the proposed project and shadow impacts on nearby streets and sidewalks would therefore be reduced. Unlike the proposed project, this alternative would cast little or no shadow on the Yerba Buena Gardens on winter afternoons. Neither this alternative nor the project would shade any open space under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department.

Alternative B-1 would generate a smaller increase in employment and daily population than the proposed project. The population effects of both this alternative and the proposed project would be less than significant.

Alternative B-1 would consist of a smaller building, and could have somewhat less impacts than the proposed project on construction noise, air quality, utilities and public services, and energy/natural resources, although these impacts would be less than significant for both the proposed project and this Alternative. This alternative would have similar effects on land use, operation noise, biology, geology/topography, water, hazards, and cultural resources as the proposed project.

Alternative B-1 would partially satisfy the project sponsor's objectives by providing a hotel that would be smaller than the proposed project, but would not provide any housing units.

The Code-Compliant Alternative B-2 would not provide restaurant and retail uses would have similar impacts as the proposed project with the exception of trip generation. The cumulative transportation impacts of the Alternative B-2 variant would have less than five percent of the growth in cumulative

volumes at the intersection of Fifth and Howard Streets. There would be no potentially significant impacts, and this Alternative B-2 variant would be environmentally superior.

• VII. SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

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A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains summaries of the public comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the proposed 888 Howard Street project, and responses to those comments. Also included are the comments letters and the transcript of the September 6, 2001 public hearing. The project sponsor has revised the proposed project and a description is found in Section B of this chapter (page C&R.4).

All substantive comments made at the public hearing before the Planning Commission on September 6, 2001, and received during the public review period from August 4, 2001 to September 18, 2001, are presented herein by direct quotation, edited to delete repetition and nonsubstantive material only.

Comments and responses are grouped by subject matter and are arranged by topic corresponding to the Table of Contents in the Draft EIR. Each group of comments is followed by its set of responses; the order of the responses under each topic follows the order of the comments. As the subject matter of one topic may overlap that of other topics, the reader must occasionally refer to more than one group of comments and responses to review all information on a given subject. Where this occurs, cross references are provided.

Some comments do not pertain to physical environmental issues, but responses are included to provide additional information for use by decision makers.

- These comments and responses have been incorporated into the Final EIR in this chapter. Text changes resulting from comments and responses have also been incorporated in the Final EIR, as indicated in the responses. Changes from the text of the Draft EIR are indicated by solid dots (•) at the beginning of each revised section, paragraph, graphic or table.

B. REVISIONS TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

- The following discussion regarding a revised project has been added to Chapter II - Project Description in the Final EIR. In addition, a summary of this section has been added to Chapter I - Summary in the Final EIR.

A Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared for the proposed 888 Howard Street project was published on August 4, 2001 (File No.2000.0790E). The proposed project analyzed in the DEIR was for the construction of a 39-story hotel and residential building, about 400 feet tall, with approximately 630,000 square feet and two levels of below-grade parking. The existing parking lot would be removed. The hotel would be a full-service facility with approximately 500 rooms, an approximately 4,000 square-foot restaurant on the ground floor, about 1,000 square feet of retail use, and about 40,200 square feet of meeting and conference space. The fifth floor of the hotel would include a full-service health club and spa, with a 25-yard swimming pool. Above the hotel would be eleven floors of approximately 67 residential condominiums. The restaurant would be on the southwest corner of the building fronting Fifth and Howard Streets with the entrance on Howard Street. The retail space would front onto Fifth Street. Guests would enter the hotel via a porte cochere on Howard Street on the east side of the building, which would also accommodate loading for tourist buses. The proposed project would have about 67 parking spaces for the residential use, and approximately 61 independently accessible parking spaces or 100 valet parking spaces for the hotel. There would be a separate entrance on Fifth Street to the residential parking garage.

The issues studied in the DEIR included land use and zoning, visual quality and urban design, shadows and wind, and transportation, and air quality. The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would not result in any project specific effects on the environment, however, the proposed project would contribute considerably to the growth in cumulative volumes at two intersections – Howard/Fifth (14.7 percent) and Harrison/Fifth (5.5 percent) – which would be considered a significant cumulative impact.

Proposed Revisions to Project

Subsequent to the publication of the Draft EIR, the project sponsor has revised the project to a lower height of 340 feet and eliminated the 67 residential units. The revised proposed project would be a 33-story hotel with approximately 600 rooms and the same amount of restaurant, retail and meeting and conference space as originally proposed (an approximately 4,000 square-foot restaurant on the ground floor, about 1,000 square feet of retail use, and about 40,200 square feet of meeting and conference space). The design of the proposed project would be similar to the original proposal, but 60 feet lower in height. Table 1 below, shows a comparison of the proposed project and the proposed revisions.

Table 1		
Original Proposed Project and Revised Proposed Project		
	Original Proposal	Revised Proposal
Height	400 feet	340 feet
Number of Stories	39 stories	33 stories
Total Square Footage*	630,000 square feet	487,900 square feet
Number of Hotel Rooms*	500 rooms	600 rooms
Number of Residential Units	67 units	none
Retail Space*	1,000 square feet	1,000 square feet
Restaurant Space*	4,000 square feet	4,000 square feet
Meeting and Conference Space*	42,000 square feet	42,000 square feet
Parking Garage	two levels below grade	one level below grade
Number of Parking Spaces*	128 independently accessible or 61 independently accessible and 100 valet park	75 independently accessible or 115 valet park
Number of Loading Docks	3	3

*

All numbers are approximate

The revised proposed project would feature one level of parking in the underground parking garage that would accommodate 75 self-parked cars, or approximately 115 valet-parked cars. There would be another

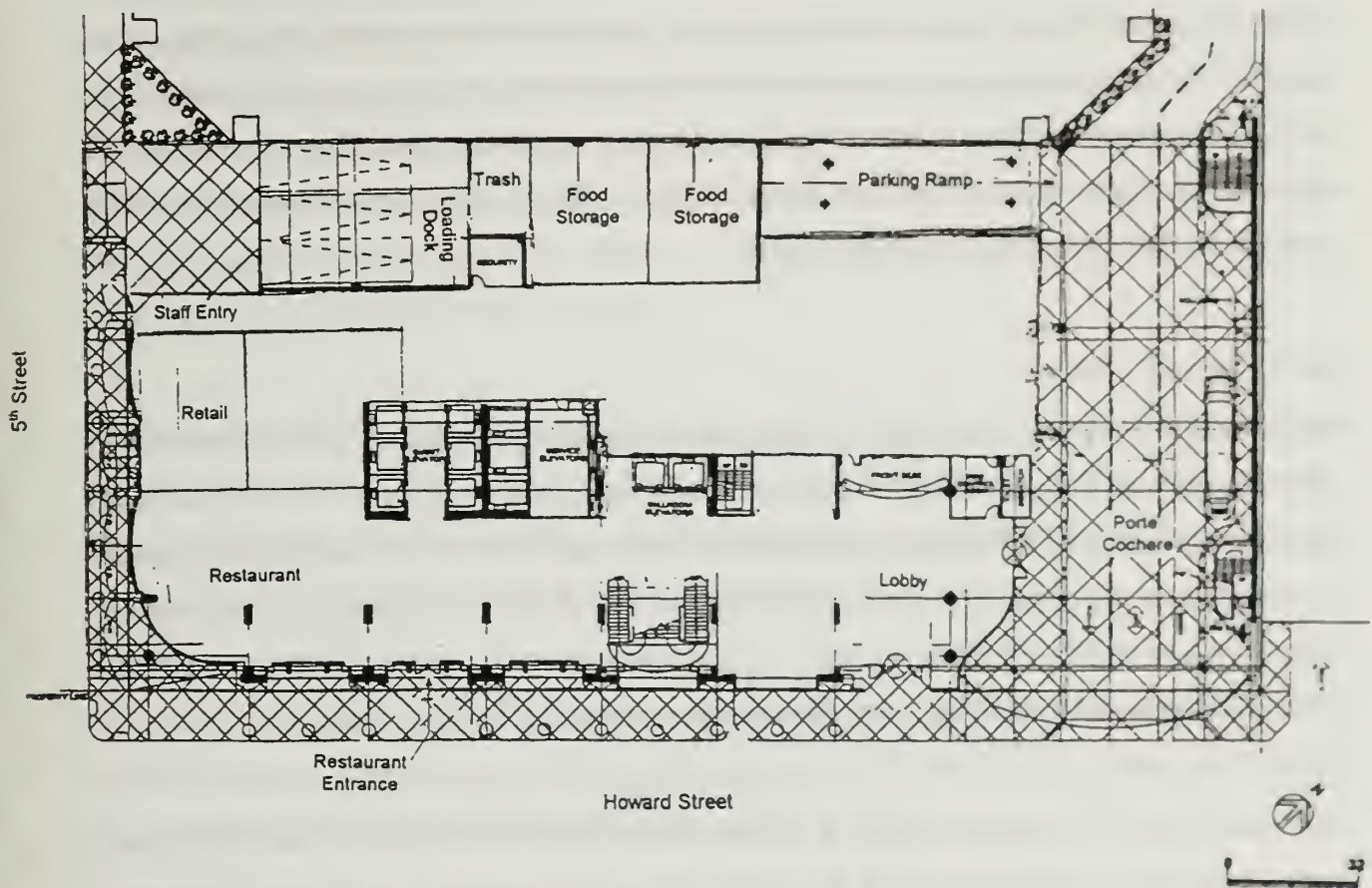
basement level that would be used for storage and mechanical space. The loading docks would be moved from the proposed location on the Porte Cochere and relocated to Fifth Street where the entrance to the residential parking garage was proposed for the original proposed project (Figure 1, page C&R.7).

Evaluation of the Revised Project

Section 31.19(c)(1) of the San Francisco Administrative Code states that a modified project must be reevaluated and that, "If, on a basis of such reevaluation, the Environmental Review Officer determines, based on the requirements of CEQA, that no additional environmental review is necessary, this determination and the reasons therefore shall be noted in writing in the case record, and no further evaluation shall be required by this Chapter." The CEQA Guidelines call for additional environmental documentation unless the lead agency determines that the changes that are proposed for the project would not involve any new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.

The revised project as described above was evaluated for its potential for environmental impacts particularly in relationship to the originally proposed project. The analysis found that the revised project would result in fewer or less intense potential environmental impacts than the original project as it would be a smaller building that would generate a less intensive amount of use. In addition, the analysis found there would be no additional adverse environmental effects. Even though there would be an increase in the number of hotel rooms (approximately 600 with the revised project as compared to the 500 rooms envisioned in the original project), the elimination of the 60 to 70 residential units would result in environmental impacts that were either less, reduced or substantially the same as the original project.

The comparison of the potential environmental impacts found that the revised project would either have less or substantially the same environmental impacts as the original project as set out in the Draft EIR in the environmental areas of air quality; construction noise; utilities and public services; geology, topography and seismicity; biology; water; hazardous materials; energy and natural resources. All the mitigation and improvement measures that were proposed in these environmental areas for the original project will also be implemented with the revised project.



Source: Patri Merker Architects

REVISED PROJECT GROUND FLOOR PLAN FIGURE C&R 1

In some of the environmental areas that were reevaluated: land use and zoning; urban design and visual quality; shadow and wind; population, employment and housing; and transportation and parking, it was found that the revised project had somewhat different impacts than the original project, however, no additional environmental impacts were found. The differences are discussed below by category. All the mitigation and improvement measures that were proposed for the original project in these environmental areas will be implemented with the revised project.

Land Use and Zoning

Land Use changes that would result with the implementation of the original project are set forth in the Draft EIR on pages 30 to 38 and in the Initial Study (Appendix A) on pages A-15 to A-16. The evaluation found that the uses proposed by the original project are permitted by the *Planning Code*, and although the new uses would be a change from the existing uses, the project would not have a significant impact on land use. With the revised project, the residential use would be eliminated and the revised project would include hotel, restaurant, retail, and parking uses which are also permitted by the *Planning Code*.

The revised project is proposed at a height of 340 feet, 60 feet less than the original project, and the same height permitted by the Height and Bulk district the zoning in the adjacent Yerba Buena Gardens and Moscone Convention Center. The current height district at the project site is 160 feet, and the revised project would still require a change in the Height and Bulk District, albeit from the 160-F district to a 340-I district. Therefore, the effects of the revised project would be substantially the same.

Visual Quality and Urban Design

The changes to the visual quality and urban design of the existing environment that would result with the implementation of the original project are discussed in the Draft EIR on pages 38 to 49 and in the Initial Study (Appendix A) on pages A-16 to A-17. The building design of the revised proposed project would be similar to the original proposed project only 60 feet lower in height.

The revised proposed project would be substantially higher than most surrounding buildings and would be visually prominent from many viewpoints, both near and distant. The Draft EIR noted that the original

proposed project's height and configuration would make it readily apparent from nearby locations such as Fifth and Folsom Streets (one block to the south), Market and Fifth Streets (two blocks to the north), and Howard and Fourth Streets (one block to the east). From more distant vantage points to the south, such as Highways 80 and 280 looking north, the proposed project would be readily visible as the highest building in its immediate vicinity, although it would be similar in visual character and height to other high-rise buildings in the existing downtown cityscape. The revised proposed project would be viewed in a similar manner, although 60 feet lower in height.

While the revised proposed project would be visible from various locations, possibly including some open spaces, the proposed project would not block any public view corridors. Views from public streets or private properties may be altered by the proposed construction, although this effect would be limited by the fact that the neighborhood is already densely developed.

As a result, it cannot be concluded that the revised proposed project would have demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area, and thus, the revised proposed project would have a less than significant impact on urban design and visual quality.

Shadows and Wind

Changes to the existing shadows that would result with the implementation of the original project are addressed in the Draft EIR on pages 50 to 59.

Shadow patterns for existing, proposed, and approved buildings in the project area, plus the original proposed project, were created for representative times of the day (10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m.) for the four seasons: during winter and summer solstices (December 21 and June 21), when the sun is at its lowest and highest, and during spring and fall equinoxes (March 21 and September 21), when the sun is at its midpoint.

The Draft EIR noted that the original proposed project would not shade any open space areas under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department, and would shade portions of Yerba Buena Gardens

during limited periods of the year (winter afternoons). The shadow impact of the original proposed project, however, would be considered less than significant. Since the shadows cast by the revised proposed project would be shorter than the original proposed project and also would not shade any public open spaces, the shadow impact of the revised proposed project would be considered less than significant.

The Draft EIR discussed the original proposed project wind effects on pages 59 to 63, and concluded that the original proposed project's wind effects would be less than significant. The wind conditions created by the proposed revision to the project building would be the same or slightly less than the changes in wind speed measured for the original proposed project, and would also be considered less than significant.

Population, Employment and Housing

Population, employment and housing changes that would result with the implementation of the original project are analyzed in the Initial Study (Appendix A in the Draft EIR) on pages A-17 to A-18. The addition of 60 to 70 residential units in the original proposed project, the approximately 1,000 square feet of retail space, and 433,000 square feet of hotel space including 500 hotel rooms would increase the daily population on the project site by up to approximately 1,275 people. The revised proposed project would increase the projected population on the site to approximately 1,420 people compared to 1,275 for the original proposed project. There would be about 610 new jobs on the site compared to about 503 for the original proposed project.

The Draft EIR/Initial Study concluded that although the population increase of the original proposed project would be potentially noticeable to the immediately adjacent neighbors, the increase would be small relative to the existing population of the concentrated cultural, hotel, commercial and residential uses in the project area, and would not be a significant impact of the original proposed project. Similarly, the population increase of the revised proposed project would be small relative to the existing population of the concentrated cultural, hotel, commercial and residential uses in the project area. Therefore, the population increases of the revised proposed project would not be a significant impact.

Since the residential use for the original proposed project would be eliminated, the proposed project sponsor would contribute approximately \$5,443,000 to the Affordable Housing Project Program as an in-lieu fee.

Transportation

Transportation changes that would result with the implementation of the original project are set forth in the Draft EIR on pages 64 to 89. Overall, the weekday daily and weekday PM peak hour trip generation would be similar for both projects (see Table 2). The revised proposed project would generate more person-trips than the original proposed project on a daily basis – 5,102 person-trips as compared to 4,996 person-trips. However, the revised proposed project would generate fewer person-trips than the original proposed project during the weekday PM peak hour – 516 person-trips as compared to 552 person-trips.

Table 2				
Person-Trip Generation Comparison				
Land Use	Proposed Project		Revised Project	
	Daily Person-Trips	PM Peak Hour Person-Trips	Daily Person-Trips	PM Peak Hour Person-Trips
Hotel	3,460	329	4,152	394
Restaurant	800	108	800	108
Retail	150	14	150	14
Residential	586	101	0	0
Total	4,996	551	5,102	516

Source: *SF Guidelines, Citywide Travel Behavior Survey*, Wilbur Smith Associates – November 2001

During the weekday PM peak hour, the original proposed project and the revised proposed project would generate similar volumes of auto, transit and walk/other person-trips (as shown in Tables 3 and 4 on the following page). In addition, both the original proposed project and the revised proposed project would generate 115 vehicle-trips during the weekday PM peak hour. The percentage of inbound and outbound vehicle-trips would be similar for the original proposed project and the revised proposed project.

Intersection Operating Conditions

With the original proposed project, the driveway for the hotel parking garage would be accessed from Howard Street and the driveway for the residential garage would be accessed from Fifth Street. Since the revised proposed project would eliminate the residential uses, the former residential parking spaces would be converted to hotel parking and would be accessed via the hotel garage. The reassignment of some vehicle-trips from Fifth Street to Howard Street would not substantially change the turning movement volumes at the study intersections.

Table 3					
Proposed Project Trip Generation by Mode					
Weekday PM Peak Hour					
Land Use	Person-Trips				Vehicle Trips
	Auto	Transit	Walk/Other¹	Total	
Hotel	108	151	70	329	76
Restaurant	39	31	38	108	22
Retail	4	2	8	14	2
Residential	17	56	27	100	15
Total	168	240	143	551	115

Source: *SF Guidelines*, 1990 U.S. Census, Wilbur Smith Associates – April 2001

Notes:

¹ "Other" mode includes bicycles, motorcycles, and taxis.

Table 4					
Revised Project Trip Generation by Mode					
Weekday PM Peak Hour					
Land Use	Person-Trips				Vehicle Trips
	Auto	Transit	Walk/Other¹	Total	
Hotel	130	182	82	394	92
Restaurant	39	31	38	108	22
Retail	4	2	8	14	2
Total	173	215	128	516	115

Source: *SF Guidelines*, 1990 U.S. Census, Wilbur Smith Associates – November 2001

Notes:

¹ "Other" mode includes bicycles, motorcycles, and taxis.

Under the Existing plus Proposed Project conditions, all 11 study intersections operated at similar service levels to Existing conditions, and no intersections were determined to worsen to unacceptable conditions. Since the revised proposed project would generate the same number of vehicle-trips as the original proposed project during the weekday PM peak hour, it is anticipated that the Existing plus Project operation conditions at the study intersections would be similar for both the original proposed project and the revised proposed project.

Because the original proposed project would not cause the level of service at any of the intersections to deteriorate to LOS E or F, or to deteriorate from LOS E to LOS F or from LOS D to E or F, the Draft EIR concluded that implementation of the original proposed project would not create any significant impacts on traffic conditions in the study area under the existing plus project conditions. The revised proposed project would also not create any significant impacts on traffic conditions in the study area under the existing plus project conditions.

Under year 2015 cumulative conditions, ten of the eleven study intersections would operate at LOS E or F during the weekday P.M. peak hour. These poor conditions would be the direct result of the anticipated general growth in traffic volumes in the area. The Draft EIR noted that at these intersections, the original proposed project would contribute 2.3 percent or less of the total 2015 cumulative traffic volumes. The original proposed project would contribute considerably to the growth in cumulative volumes at two intersections – Howard/Fifth (14.7 percent) and Harrison/Fifth (5.5 percent) – which would be considered a significant cumulative impact. Since the revised proposed project would contribute the same amount of traffic to the cumulative volume, it would also have a significant cumulative impact. The original proposed project would contribute 6.1 percent to the cumulative growth at Howard/Fourth, however, since most of the contribution would be to the non-critical direction, the effect would not be considered significant. The revised proposed project would also contribute the same amount, which would not be considered a significant cumulative impact.

Parking Conditions

The revised proposed project would have a smaller parking demand than the original proposed project – 237 spaces compared to 288 spaces. The revised proposed project would provide fewer parking spaces

than the original proposed project– 115 valet parking spaces as compared to 167 parking spaces with the original proposed project. The revised proposed project would have a parking shortfall of 122 spaces (in addition to the 100-space parking lot that would be displaced with construction of either the original proposed project and the revised proposed project). Since the original proposed project would have a parking shortfall of 113 spaces, the revised proposed project would have a similar effect on area-wide parking conditions as the original proposed project and it would not be considered to be a significant impact.

Service/Delivery Vehicles and Loading Space Demand

The revised proposed project would generate an additional four service/delivery vehicles than the original proposed project– 57 trips as compared to 53 trips. The revised proposed project, however, would continue to have a demand for three loading docks during both the average and peak hours of loading activity. As such, the proposed loading dock supply of three spaces for the revised proposed project would meet demand.

C. LIST OF PERSONS COMMENTING

Jenny Batallones, South of Market Community Action Network (Planning Commission Public Hearing comments, September 6, 2001)

Commissioner Roslyn Baltimore, San Francisco Planning Commission (Planning Commission Public Hearing comments, September 6, 2001)

Alan Blackwood, Resident (written comments, September 5, 2001)

Joe Chmielewski, Resident (written comments, September 7, 2001)

Barbara Cook, P.E., Chief, Northern California - Coastal Cleanup Operations Branch, Department of Toxic Substances Control (written comments, September 12, 2001)

John Elberling, Chair, The Yerba Buena Consortium (written comments, September 7, 2001)

Jean Finney, District Branch Chief, for Harry Yahata, District Director, State of California Department of Transportation (written comments, September 17, 2001)

Ron Groshardt, 6th Street Agenda (Planning Commission Public Hearing comments, September 6, 2001)

Sue Hestor, Attorney at Law, submitted on behalf of Friends of Yerba Buena Gardens (written comments, August 6, 2001)

Patrice Johnson, Family Support Coordinator, South of Market Child Care (Planning Commission Public Hearing comments, September 6, 2001)

Commissioner Myrna Lim, San Francisco Planning Commission (Planning Commission Public Hearing comments, September 6, 2001)

Richard Marquez, 6th Street Agenda (Planning Commission Public Hearing comments, September 6, 2001)

Quintin Mecke, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition (Planning Commission Public Hearing comments, September 6, 2001, written comments, September 18, 2001)

Commissioner Anita Theoharis, San Francisco Planning Commission (Planning Commission Public Hearing comments, September 6, 2001)

D. COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

PROPOSED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Comment #1

“The other point in this Draft EIR that I notice is with regard to the transferable development rights. I didn’t see with respect to the building that it is being used for -- which transferable development rights building are being used for, to compensate for the development of this particular project.” (Commissioner Lim, San Francisco Planning Commission)

Response #1

The proposed project does not call for the Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs). Page 28 in the Draft EIR states that in the C-3-S zone, the allowable FAR is 5:1, or 7.5:1 with Transfer of Development Rights. As noted in the same paragraph, the project sponsor seeks a change in the existing zoning designation from C-3-S to C-3-S (SU), Downtown Commercial Support with Special Use Overlay for Hotel and Residential, to allow for a 7.5:1 FAR for hotel uses and no FAR requirement for Residential uses and the related subsurface parking for each use.

LAND USE AND ZONING

General

Comment #2

“It is clear that a project of this magnitude will have an effect that people in South of Market will feel has a significant impact on the community.

A more thorough investigation of this proposal needs to be made, of the effects on surrounding areas, small businesses, neighbors, and future development nearby.

“This project should be considered in comparison to alternative projects that could prove to have lesser impact. Without the full picture, it is impossible to determine at this time whether or not Continental’s project can be a healthy addition to the current neighborhood. Much more information is needed.” (Patrice Johnson, South of Market Child Care)

Response #2

The Draft EIR text and Initial Study (Appendix A in DEIR) address the physical impacts of the proposed project including the areas of land use, visual quality, urban design, glare, population and housing, noise, air quality, wind, shadow, transportation, utilities and public services, biology, hydrology, water quality, geology and topography, energy and natural resources, hazards, and cultural resources (archaeology and historic and architectural resources). The Draft EIR concluded on page 101 that the proposed project would have potentially unavoidable significant cumulative impacts in the area of traffic. No other potentially significant impacts were identified in accordance with Section 15382 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Regs § 15382)

The commenter seems to be suggesting that the Draft EIR should analyze the social and economic effects of the proposed project with respect to the community, people, business and so forth. The effects analyzed in an EIR must be related to a physical change in the environment (CEQA Section 15358(b)). Economic and social changes are not considered environmental effects under CEQA. The social and economic effects need to be considered only if they would lead to a physical environmental effect. Local concerns or other planning considerations may be considered by the Planning Commission when they consider approval or disapproval of their project.

Alternatives to the proposed project that would have lesser impacts are discussed on pages 102 to pages 111 in the Draft EIR. The City Planning Commission will review these alternatives during the hearing for approvals on the proposed project.

Comment #3

"I question the appropriateness of the C3-S(SU) overlay to allow residential/hotel space to be built in an area zoned for downtown commercial support. The DEIR attempts to justify the location of the project by comparing it in size and bulk to buildings outside of the zoning area in which it will be built. The DEIR also fails to address the displacement of potential PDR space in the C3-S district." (Joe Chmielewski)

Response #3

The proposed project would contain hotel, residential, retail, restaurant, and parking uses which are all permitted uses in the C-3-S District. As noted in Response #1, the proposed zoning change from C-3-S to C-3-S (SU) is to allow for an increase in the FAR from 5:1 to 7.5:1 for hotel uses, and no FAR requirement for residential uses and related subsurface parking for each use.

CEQA does not require nor permit justification of a project in an EIR. The main objective of an EIR is to provide information to the decision makers regarding the physical effects of the proposed project to the environment. The Draft EIR describes the existing land uses and buildings on pages 31, 34, 35, 38 and 39. The heights of nearby buildings in the nearby zoning districts are identified including the C-3-S, C-3-R, C-3-0, and South of Market Use Districts. The 29-Story W Hotel is two blocks to the east of the proposed project in the same zoning district (C-3-S). The Draft EIR notes on page 39, that the proposed project would be substantially higher than most surrounding buildings and would be visually prominent from many vantage points, both near and distant. There are six photomontages of the proposed project that illustrate the height and massing compared to the existing setting. Social or economic effects while not appropriate for an EIR can be brought before the Planning Commission when they meet to consider the proposed project.

The proposed project site is currently a private surface parking lot, therefore, no production, distribution and repair (PDR) businesses would be displaced. The extent to which potential PDR space in the proposed project area could be affected cannot be determined. It would be a speculative exercise and beyond the scope of the Draft EIR.

Comment #4

"I'm here to voice my concern over the Draft EIR report of this Continental project. The Draft EIR does not address the possible effects that hotel and luxury condominium project on 5th and Howard will have on the surrounding neighborhood. As a community advocate, I'm concerned about the possible impact it will have on the low-income people of color and the low-income community presently South of Market.

"These communities offer cultural diversity within a neighborhood that has been displaced and gentrified with dot-com and live-work loft development. These communities need to be preserved and maintained.

“So before approving this EIR, we urge you to review and address our issues, the community issues.”
(Jenny Batallones, South of Market Community Action Network)

Response #4

The community issues referenced by the commenter are social and economic issues, non-physical areas of concern that are not required to be addressed in the Draft EIR. As noted in Response #2 and #3, the Draft EIR analyzes those impacts of the proposed project of a physical nature and not areas of economic and social change.

Comment #5

I have talked to the representatives of the project sponsor about the situation; about the displacement of the community in that particular area -- particularly the Filipino community of that area -- that that be addressed right off the bat in conceptualizing the project.

“And I would like to commend -- to add to the whole thing that they are in fact very willing to work with that community, to bring in residents.” (Commissioner Lim, San Francisco Planning Commission)

Response #5

As noted above, the proposed project would not displace businesses or residents as the site is currently a private surface parking lot. The project sponsor's representatives have indicated that they have met with various community groups during past year to hear public concerns about the proposed project and to obtain an understanding of the South of Market Community. The proposed project sponsor states that they have developed a community benefits package that includes monetary support above and beyond the required City exactions. According to the proposed project sponsor they plan to provide the following:

- Job outreach and training available to local residents for potential union employment opportunities in the proposed project.
- Assistance in the creation of a mixed-use health center, a mixed-use youth center, and affordable housing project.
- Assistance in the creation of a community development corporation to address the needs of the local Filipino community.
- Support for local senior programs.

- Support for programs that benefit the 6th Street corridor.
- Support for grades K-12 educational programs for the local school age children.

These elements of community involvement will be included as conditions of approval for the proposed project.

Comment #6

“Would it be possible to have a CEIA (Community Equity Impact Assessment) done? I understand that is a relatively new planning tool that is primarily used for more regional planning such as the Smart Growth Planning for the Bay Area which is being led by ABAG [Association of Bay Area Governments], but I believe that the questions that this tool poses are precisely the ones that must be taken into consideration with regard to this project and others like it. Unfortunately, these questions are no where to be found in the Draft EIR.” (Quintin Mecke, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition)

Response #6

The Urban Habitat Program has developed the “Community Equity Impact Assessment (CEIA)” instrument for the purposes of estimating social and economic impacts of proposed plans. Focused attention is given to potential impacts on low-income populations and communities of color. A major objective of the CEIA is to “systematically explore probable impacts early in the planning process in order to inform and provide guidance to community representatives and advocates, as well as to public agency staff and elected or appointed officials that ultimately set policy. The CEIA aims to expose policies that would be damaging or inequitable to such communities (e.g. placing more of a burden on low-income communities than on affluent communities) and perhaps recommend elimination or alteration of the policies”.¹ The CEIA includes most of the environmental areas addressed in the Draft EIR for the proposed project and additional areas of social and economic concerns. The CEIA was introduced this year and is still in the initial stages of distribution. It is primarily designed for community land use planning and not for specific projects.

¹ Urban Habitat Program “*Cracking the Code, a Handbook for Community Participation in Land use Planning for the San Francisco Bay Area, 2001*”. This book is on file#2000.0790E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, Fifth Floor, San Francisco.

As noted in the responses above, an economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment and is not required to be addressed in the Draft EIR unless specific physical impacts occur as a result of the project. The Planning Commission may take into account the economic and social changes when the project is heard for approval.

Comment #7

"The proposed project is a classic example of 'spot zoning.' As a legal matter the very substantial upzoning, master plan amendments, etc., required for the proposed project to thereupon be approvable by separate subsequent action of the Planning Commission are in fact themselves a 'project' for which environmental review is required.

"The DEIR fails to report, detail, discuss, and cumulatively evaluate the impacts of this spot rezoning combined [with] the two adjacent Redevelopment project plans/rezonings now planned for adoption early next year, each with its own separate EIR. These are the South of Market Project Area Plan Amendment/Rezoning, and the Mid-Market Survey Area plan adoption and rezoning. Likewise, the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area's most recent plan amendment included important information on cumulative development impacts in that adjacent district. This means that the entire story of proposed development rules, projects, cumulative impacts, etc, for this section of SOMA is not being told by this DEIR. This is a violation of CEQA requirements for cumulative impact analysis. There is no applicable 'program EIR' for this location to provide such analysis. The 1985 Downtown Plan EIR -- the last such program EIR for the C3-S District -- is hopelessly out of date.

"This fundamental legal flaw pervades several sections of the DEIR's analyses. All need correcting." (John Elberling, The Yerba Buena Consortium)

Response #7

The proposed project would include hotel, residential, restaurant, retail and parking uses all of which are permitted either outright or as conditional uses by the *City of San Francisco Planning Code* in the C-3-S District. The proposed project seeks a change in the Height/Bulk Limit from 160-F to 400-M, and a change in the Zoning Map from C-3-S, Downtown Commercial Support, to C-3-S(SU) Downtown Commercial Support with Special Use Overlay for Hotel and Residential to allow for a 7.5 FAR for Hotel and no FAR requirement for Residential and related subsurface parking for each use. In order to accomplish this, the proposed project would require Planning Commission approval for *Planning Code* Section 303 (Conditional Use) for 500 new hotel rooms; Section 309 (Permit Review in a C-3 District); and Section 302 (Planning Code Amendments) to amend the Height, Bulk and FAR of the proposed project site. In addition the project would

require Section 4.105 of the *San Francisco Charter* for *General Plan* amendments to allow for the necessary Amendments to the Zoning Map of the *City Planning Code* (Reclassification of Property). The Draft EIR identifies these approval actions on pages 2, 28, 29, 35, 36, A-13 and A-14. The potential environmental effects of the proposed project and the required approvals are addressed in the Draft EIR and do not require subsequent or separate analyses. (In fact, the California Environmental Quality Act discourages separate or “piecemeal” actions which would avoid full disclosure of environmental impacts).

The allegation of “spot zoning” typically arises where the Planning Commission is considering the rezoning of a single lot or small parcel of property held by a single owner and the rezoning would permit land uses not available to the adjacent property. Rezoning of a single parcel is not uncommon, if the action were consistent with the *General Plan's* land use policies. The Draft EIR identifies some key objectives and policies of the *General Plan* on pages 36 and 37. The Planning Commission will review the proposed project’s consistency with the *General Plan* during the hearing for approval or disapproval of the proposed project.

CEQA requires that the project be evaluated against existing conditions, not the conditions that might be proposed or adopted sometime in the future, therefore, the Draft EIR compared the proposed project with conditions that currently exist in the area. The cumulative effects of the proposed project and other growth in the proposed project area are addressed in the Draft EIR for visual quality (pages 39 to 49), shadows and wind (pages 51 to 63), transportation (pages 87 to 88), and air quality (pages 91 to 93). The assumptions used in the cumulative transportation analysis included potential growth in the areas addressed in the South of Market Project Area Plan Amendment/Rezoning, the Mid-Market Survey Area plan adoption and rezoning and the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area’s most recent plan amendment. The proposed project is not within the boundaries of these planning areas, but it is adjacent to the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area, across the street from the South of Market Project Area, and a block from the Mid-Market Survey Area.

To clarify the assumptions used in the cumulative evaluations, the following paragraph will be added to the Draft EIR on page 35 under Plans and Approvals:

“Two major planning efforts are currently underway in areas in close proximity to the project site. The project site is just across the street from the South of Market Project Area and a block from the Mid-Market Survey Area. In addition, the project site is south of the Yerba Buena Redevelopment plan area. These efforts under the direction of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency could lead to land-use changes in these surrounding areas in the future. Where land use changes are reasonably foreseeable they will be incorporated into the evaluation of the cumulative impacts for the project.”

The EIR for the South of Market Project Area Plan Amendment/Rezoning was certified in 1997, and the EIR for the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area Amendment was certified in 1999. The Draft EIR for the Mid-Market Survey Area plan is expected to be published in 2002. It is useful to note that the proposed project Draft EIR and the Yerba Buena Plan Amendment are for specific projects and the other two documents referenced by the commenter are for area plans. Nevertheless, the cumulative traffic conditions described in all four documents are similar. The cumulative effects addressed in the Draft EIR are comprehensive and include the proposed development rules, projects, cumulative impacts, etc, for the proposed project area.

Planning

Comment #8

“How does the Planning Department justify and account for a 25-story upzoning without some comprehensive neighborhood-based planning? Planning cannot and should not take place in a vacuum nor should it be done parcel-by-parcel such as is the case here. I’m quite sure this is not in the boundaries of the EIR but somewhere along the line there must be responsibility to the idea of actually planning and not going project-by-project without any study of the cumulative effects. This is especially true given the amount of live/work units that have [been built] here in SOMA as well as the (mis)use of the ‘business services’ classification in recent years.

“My concern is without a sort of -- lack of overall comprehensive planning, this once again is sort of being parcel by parcel. This is a massive up-zoning in an area that was very much considered transition land from Yerba Buena to the western and low-income parts of South of Market, so without that sort of comprehensive plan or sort of ‘Stop and let’s actually take a look at how this actually impacts the

neighborhood as a whole,' I think the Draft EIR is sort of missing some of the impacts to the business and general community'' (Quintin Mecke, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition)

Response #8

As noted in the above response, the Draft EIR for the proposed project addresses the cumulative impacts of the proposed project and other projected growth in the project area. The proposed project is on the edge of the Downtown C-3 District and adjacent to the South of Market Area, both of which have comprehensive plans. The uses of the proposed project are permitted, however, the proposed project seeks a change in the height and FAR. The planning process does not take place in a vacuum, nor is it done on a parcel-by-parcel basis. There was community input in the development of the South of Market Area Plan and the Downtown Area Plan as well as the South of Market Project Area Plan Amendment/Rezoning and the Mid-Market Survey Area Plan/Rezoning currently in process and near the proposed project.

The commenter also seems to be concerned with the social and economic impacts to the business and general community which are not subjects required to be discussed in a Draft EIR but may be taken into account by the Planning Commission in their deliberations on the proposed project

The DEIR does describe and disclose the amount and type of development that would result on the block of the project site bounded by Fifth, Mission, Fourth and Howard Streets. Essentially, the block would be developed with the proposed project, the Moscone Convention Center expansion project and the Fifth and Mission Garage. These uses all relate more closely to the existing uses to the east and north of the proposed project site (i.e., Moscone Convention Center and downtown retail area).

The DEIR also describes and discloses the size, scale and use of the proposed building relative to all surrounding development. The proposed project would be much taller than surrounding development to the west and south, and would also be of a different use type than the prevailing uses west and south. The DEIR describes and discloses that the proposed project would require changes in the existing zoning controls before the proposed project could be approved.

Development of the proposed project, however, would not dictate what types of uses could be planned or approved for the remainder of the South of Market as a result of a community based planning effort. Potential physical environmental effects of the proposed project on the existing setting are analyzed, but impacts on potential future surrounding uses, that could result from a future plan, are unknown at this time and very speculative.

Comment #9

"There is need for additional community planning guidance. South of Market residents and businesses are beginning to reconcile their various neighborhood concepts under a new plan which will likely call for different zoning guidelines for the eastern and western parts of the district. While the highest and best use of the proposed site is likely a high-rise hotel, without careful district-wide planning, a development of the magnitude proposed right in the middle of SoMa risks doing three things: (1) it could define an entirely new urban context unto itself; or (2) it could destroy the existing neighborhood contexts; or (3) it could obviate most of the scenarios which have yet to be considered by planners who are taking more than hotel demand into consideration.

"It is difficult to see how the decision of whether to build a 15-, 25- or 40-story structure can be made in the absence of a comprehensive planning framework and during such a time of transformation.

"We do not consider mitigations to be appropriate tools for addressing the above planning concerns. The overriding impact of this hotel will be several hundred new hotel rooms and possibly several dozen high-end condominiums. We do not comment on whether there is a market case to be made for these rooms and condos either citywide or regionally or whether the most significant local economic impact of the development (i.e., several hundred service jobs for unskilled and semi-skilled workers) mitigates the environmental impact. We do note, however, that labor is relatively mobile and that if there is a case to be made for more hotel rooms, then the market will create them (and the associated jobs) either at the proposed site or nearby in due course. The presumed market demand for hotel rooms and condos will not evaporate in six months or a year" (Joe Chmielewski)

Response #9

Planning is an ongoing process in San Francisco, and if there is a need for additional planning to be done on the South of Market Area, the rationale and necessity for such planning should be conveyed to the Planning Department and Commission for their review and consideration. However, unless there is a moratorium in place, property owners may come forward with development proposals for consideration by the Planning Commission. The proposed project is on the southwest corner of a block that is already developed, particularly the Moscone West Convention Center and the Fifth and Mission Streets Garage. In essence, the uses on the block

are already set and the project site is not demonstrative of the remaining planning the may be underway for the South of Market area..

In the course of reviewing the applications for approval of the proposed project, the decision makers will consider not only the environmental effects of the proposed project, but also the changes requested within the context of the proposed project location and adjacent community. The public may also address their concerns about the proposed project to the Planning Commission at the time of the conditional use hearing.

A general concept of the CEQA environmental process is that information on any substantial adverse change in the physical conditions which exist in the area affected by the proposed project be provided to the decision makers and the public. Another concept also found in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(a)(2) is that ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced be identified. This is what the Draft EIR has endeavored to do and the mitigation measures in the Draft EIR deal with physical changes to the area surrounding the proposed project and not to addressing planning concerns.

The mitigations listed in the Draft EIR (Chapter 4, pages 96 to 100, and pages A-29 to A-32) would minimize or eliminate potential physical impacts of the proposed project. Existing City, State, and federal regulations require a variety of protective and other measures that would also serve to mitigate potential proposed project impacts.

VISUAL QUALITY

Comment #10

“Coming out of Yerba Buena, the skyline there -- it goes down, towards 6th Street. And now we’ve got this thing going up in the air 400 feet. Environmental impact has to address these issues, and I don’t think it does in this case.”

"It is one block away from 6th Street; it's just totally out of character with the neighborhood that it is in. The height -- it's two and a half times -- if there was an area you were in where you are zoning for a particular parcel instead of community planning, this has got to be it. I mean, 400 feet?" (Ron Groshardt, 6th Street Agenda)

Response #10

The Draft EIR addresses the visual quality effects on pages 38 to 49 including five photomontages illustrating the proposed project. The Draft EIR noted that the proposed project would be a major new element and a noticeable increase in the existing scale of development, and would be visible from many nearby and distant viewpoints. The Draft EIR states that although the proposed project would contrast with the existing lower scale development to the south and west of the proposed project site, it would be consistent in character and height with the existing cityscape of high-rise contemporary buildings in the downtown area (C-3 Zoning Districts) to the North and East. The Draft EIR concludes that the proposed project would not have demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area.

Comment #11

"The proposed upzoning and building projects would unquestionably result in a dramatic urban design impact at this location compared to what exists there now and what current zoning now would permit to be built. But the DEIR fails to make a finding of significant impact with regard to urban design. This is legally unacceptable. And thus the DEIR fails to provide mitigation measures to address this significant design impact. These are legally required." (John Elberling, The Yerba Buena Consortium)

Response #11

As noted on page 39 of the Draft EIR, a project may result in significant adverse visual quality impacts if it (1) degrades or obstructs scenic views from public areas, (2) introduces new sources of light or glare, or (3) has demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area.

As further noted in the Draft EIR, the proposed project would be substantially higher than the majority of 3-to 5-story buildings in the immediate vicinity to the west and the southwest, although it would be similar in height to the highest buildings in the downtown area to the east and north of the proposed project site. The proposed project would represent an expansion and extension

of the growth of contemporary high-rise development from the downtown area to the north and east, and the proposed project would comprise the highest building on the southern border of this development. The design, materials, and exterior treatment of the proposed project would also be consistent with these buildings and other contemporary buildings in the area as shown in the photomontages in the Draft EIR. The proposed project would be visible from more distant vantage points. The proposed project, however, would not block public views or vistas, cause excessive light or glare, or have demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area. For these reasons, the Draft EIR concluded that proposed project would have a less than significant impact on urban design and visual quality.

Aesthetics and urban design are subjective issues, and individuals may hold differing opinions about the aesthetic design of any proposed project. The commenter may address his concerns regarding the design of the proposed project to the Planning Commission at the conditional use hearing.

Comment #12

“The height/bulk photomontage is somewhat misleading. The proposed hotel, at 400 feet, is rendered in such a way that it appears almost invisible due to the choice of materials used for its façade. While it is true that the choice of veneer materials can make a big difference in the intrusiveness of a structure, the hotel will arguably have a much greater presence than the illustration implies. A greater effort at rendering this impact should be made. I also look at the rendering of the 15-story alternative photomontage as inadequate -- the photos make it look like a windowless, brown pile of rubble.” (Joe Chmielewski)

Response #12

The photomontages were developed in concert with the project architects to portray the most accurate image of the intended materials used for the facade. However, as noted on page 39 in the Draft EIR, the photosimulations deliberately accentuated the color of the proposed project to provide contrast. Thus, the actual appearance of the proposed project building may be more complementary to the existing background in terms of materials and color than shown in the photosimulations.

The Alternative B: Code-Compliant Alternative was illustrated in the Draft EIR with photomontages in order to show the massing and size of a 160-foot high building, which would likely be designed to maximize the allowable FAR. The purpose of the alternative photomontages is to compare the mass and scale of the proposed project to the alternative, not to provide any specific design or materials.

Comment #13

"I would like to state my opposition to the hotel being planned for the corner of Fifth and Howard [Streets] in San Francisco. I feel that the height of 40 stories will totally overwhelm all other structures in the area. Apparently it also exceeds the allowable height of 15 stories." (Alan Blackwood)

Response #13

The comment is noted. Please refer to Responses #10 and #11.

Comment #14

"I would also take sort of issue with the idea that this building is not out of character with existing urban patterns. These surrounding buildings are no more than 160 feet. A 400-foot hotel with 70 condominiums on top I think does change the pattern.

"The zoning, as it stands right now, was intentionally done, as sort of a transition from Yerba Buena into the western part of South of Market. This is definitely a drastic change of use, and I think it does stand out and is out of character with the existing urban pattern." (Quintin Mecke, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition)

Response #14

As noted in Response #3, the Draft EIR, in the Land Use and Visual Quality sections, considered the height of the proposed building. As also noted in Response #10, although the proposed project would contrast with the existing lower scale development to the south and west of the proposed project site. The extent of height reclassification required is another demonstration of the contrast between the height proposed and the immediate surrounding development. However, the Draft EIR points out that the proposed project would be consistent in character and height with the existing cityscape of high-rise contemporary buildings in the downtown area (C-3 Zoning Districts) to the north and east.

On page 49 of the Draft EIR, the document states that the proposed project “would be substantially higher than the majority” of buildings in the immediate vicinity and that “it would be a major new element and a noticeable increase in the existing scale.” Therefore, the Draft EIR provides the information regarding the change in relation to the existing conditions that would come about with the proposed project.

The site is zoned C-3-S and is part of the downtown area and is adjacent to the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area which contains the 39-story, 400-foot Marriott Hotel on the northeast corner of Fourth and Mission Streets; the 29-story, 300-foot W Hotel on the northeast corner of Howard and Third Streets; the 37-story, 400-foot Four Seasons Hotel and Residences on the south side of Market Street between Third and Fourth Streets, the 40-story 430-foot Starwood St. Regis hotel and condominium project at the southeast corner of Third and Mission Streets, and the 41-story, 420-foot Related Companies residential/retail/institutional project on the northeast corner of Third and Mission Streets. In addition, the 22-story (above podium), 360-foot Emporium/Forest City Site Hotel complex on Mission Street has been approved and is part of the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area.

Comment #15

“The proposed project is very much out of character with its surrounding urban context. It is continually compared in scale to buildings that exist in the areas zoned for the Downtown Plan, and not compared to the buildings in the C3-S district that is being built in, or the RESIDENTIAL buildings directly east of the project. To justify the height of the project by saying it won’t affect the view corridor for those residents because they live in low rise, high density structures with no view to speak of is . . . faulty reasoning at best.

“While it is true that there are other tall structures nearby (in the blocks surrounding Yerba Buena Gardens), those structures are much more in context with the height and bulk of surrounding buildings. For example, the Marriott Hotel is the last of the tall structures marching down Market Street from the financial District. The ‘W’ Hotel is surrounded by other tall structures from the blocks around New Montgomery Street. The location of the proposed hotel, however, is quite removed from the tall structures of the Financial District. Instead, it falls on the edge of western SoMa, which is characterized by low structures. The allowed height limit of 160 feet was chosen after much deliberation with the specific intent of maintaining existing urban patterns. A height increase of 240 feet would destroy that integrity.” (Joe Chmielewski.

Response #15

As noted above in Response #11, the Draft EIR states that the proposed project would be substantially higher than most surrounding buildings to the west and southwest and would be visually prominent from many vantage points, both near and distant. The Draft EIR does not justify any aspect of the proposed project but provides information to be used by the public and decision makers.

The Draft EIR states that the proposed project would be substantially higher than the majority of 3 to 5-story buildings in the immediate vicinity to the west and southwest, and would be a major new element and a noticeable increase in the existing scale of development. The proposed project would be the highest building on the southern border of the downtown area. However, it would not degrade or obstruct scenic views from public areas. Some nearby residents could have their private views partially blocked, but this change would not be a significant impact in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act criteria of significance for adverse visual quality impacts.

ShadowComment #16

"The public needs better information on the shadow impacts of this project.

"The Department has taken an unfortunately narrow view of what should be included in this shadow analysis. This hotel is designed to function as an extension of the Yerba Buena/Moscone Center area. Yerba Buena Center has tens of millions of dollars of public investment, not to mention thousands of hours of community and public effort to develop a project that provides a benefit to the residents of the area and of the City. There is a HUGE public investment in the open space in Yerba Buena Garden.

"Instead of fully explaining exactly how, what times and where this project will shadow the Gardens, the EIR cavalierly says it is not covered by Prop K and gives the usual mundane 10 a.m., noon and 3 p.m. shadow information. From the text it appears that in December the project will cast some new shadows on YBC. It is unclear whether there will be shadows on Hallidie Plaza.

"PLEASE EXPLAIN THIS PROJECT'S SPECIFIC SHADOW IMPACTS ON YERBA BUENA GARDENS -- WHAT, WHEN, OF HOW GREAT DURATION.

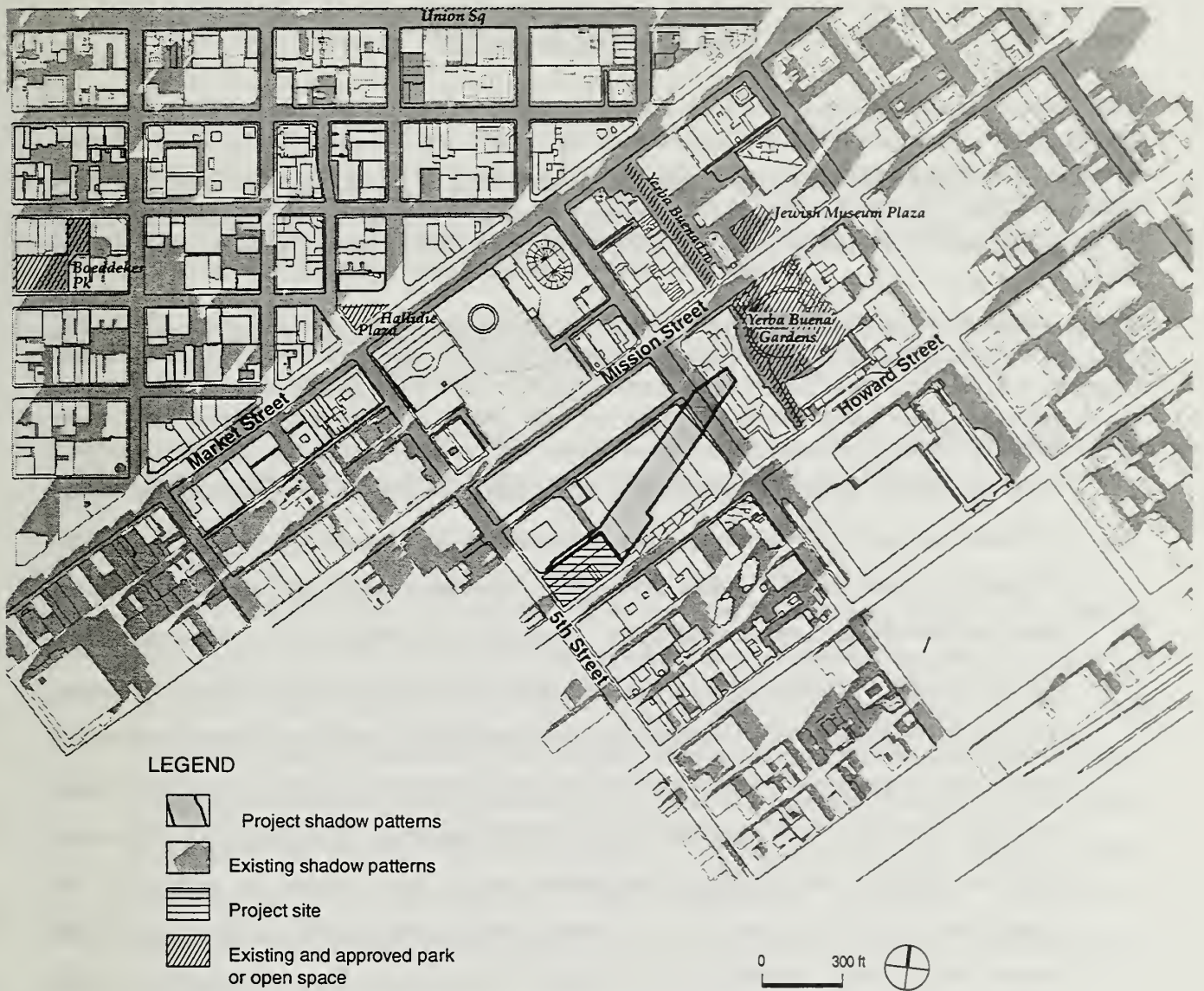
"The Redevelopment Agency and public put in substantial effort pushing the top of the Metreon complex away from the Gardens to preserve as much afternoon sunlight as possible. That effort should not be

compromised by an unforeseen increase in height to the west of YBC. Please provide detailed information on the shadow impacts on Yerba Buena.” (Sue Hestor for Friends of Yerba Buena Gardens)

Response #16

The analysis of shadows cast by the proposed project is described in the Draft EIR on pages 50 to 59. The proposed project would not shade any open space areas owned by, or under the jurisdiction of, the Recreation and Park Department, including South of Market Recreation Center, Howard-Langton Mini-Park, Union Square, and Boeddeker Park. The proposed project also would not shade Hallidie Plaza and the Cable Car Turnaround. The proposed project would shade the southernmost portions of Yerba Buena Gardens complex along Howard Street during winter afternoons. Figures 20, 21, and 22 (pages 52, 53, and 54) illustrate the extent of the proposed project shadow on December 21st, the time of year when the shadow cast by the proposed project would of maximum length. The three times of day selected for analysis (10:00 A.M., 12 Noon, and 3:00 P.M.) are standard times analyzed in all City Planning environmental analyses because they a representative of times that open space and parks are generally in maximum use.

At 12 Noon on December 21st, the proposed project would not reach YBC. As shown in the figure on the following page, 1:30 P.M. December 21st, is the time when the shadow from the proposed project would cast be the maximum amount of shade on the Yerba Buena Gardens complex. The proposed project shadow would reach the roof of the Metreon entertainment complex but would not cast new shadow on the open space area beyond the Metreon building. During the following 90 minutes, the proposed project shadow would move along the roof of the Metreon and the public walkway across Howard Street. At 3:00 P.M. December 21st, the proposed project shadow would be along Howard Street. The shadow figures indicate that shadow cast by the proposed project building on YBC open space would generally fall within the existing shadow from the Metreon building and would not create any new shadow on Yerba Buena Gardens.



Source: CADP

PROJECT SHADOW PATTERNS—DECEMBER 21, 1:30PM PST Figure C&R 2

TRANSPORTATION

General

Comment #17

“In addition, on Page 88 there is a graph regarding the level of use in the intersection. If you look to the projection of 2015, 7 out of 11 intersections will then be creating “F,” as far as traffic density and volume. The mitigation that is suggested, at least in the Draft EIR, is \$50,000 to the Department of Parking and Traffic.”

“To have 7 out of 11 intersections graded “F,” there’s \$50,000 for mitigation. I think that needs to be addressed.” (Quintin Mecke, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition)

Response #17

In the cumulative section, the proposed project, other projects and projected growth are all considered as a part of the evaluation, and while seven of the 11 study intersections in the Draft EIR would operate at LOS F, under future 2015 Cumulative conditions, all this traffic is not directly attributable to the proposed project. The proposed project, however, was considered to have a potentially significant impact to the future operating conditions at two of the intersections, Howard/5th and Harrison/5th. To help mitigate these potentially significant impacts, the proposed project sponsor has agreed to contribute \$50,000 to the Department of Parking and Traffic’s new Integrated Transportation Management System (ITMS) program. This program is a City-wide, real-time electronic transportation management system that includes the monitoring and management of traffic via closed-circuit TV cameras. Implementation of the ITMS program would improve overall traffic conditions in the South of Market area that would result in traffic improvements, lessening of congestion, and better vehicular circulation.

At the other five study intersections that would operate at LOS F under year 2015 cumulative conditions, the proposed project would have a minimal (non-significant) contribution to the future traffic volumes. As such, the Planning Department determined that the proposed project would not be required to provide mitigation measures for impacts at these locations.

Comment #18

"The very important cumulative traffic impact information (Table 2, page 78) fails to include data on several Sixth Street intersections and all Third Street intersections north of I-80, although both streets are certainly within the local functional grid area of the rezoning/project. Given the projected 'E' and 'F' levels of service at the nearby intersections that are identified -- gridlock -- and given the frequent 'F' level of service now at Third Street intersections, it is legally required to fully document the impact of all the SOMA area's three pending rezonings combined on these vital streets.

"Despite the alarming projections of widespread gridlock at these SOMA intersections, there is no credible mitigation program presented. The proposed rezoning project must address this and state the City's intended comprehensive mitigations of the cumulative impacts along with the other SOMA rezonings to meet CEQA requirements. Building project-specific mitigations do not suffice for that purpose. If such mitigation cannot be identified, then the project must be determined to have significant cumulative impacts which in fact cannot be mitigated." (John Elberling, The Yerba Buena Consortium)

Response #18

The intersections analyzed in the Draft EIR for proposed project were selected by the Planning Department because they would be the intersections that were closest to the proposed project site and would be most affected by new vehicle-trips generated by the proposed project. These intersections were analyzed for the Draft EIR and the impacts and mitigation measures are present on pages 64 to 88 and 96. The further away an intersection is from the project site, the more traffic is dispersed and the more difficult it becomes to accurately estimate the amount of traffic contributed by the proposed project at these representative intersections. Therefore the contribution to the future traffic volumes at intersections along Sixth and Third Street was not performed.

As noted in the Transportation Study for this proposed project prepared by Wilbur Smith Associates, additional capacity would be needed throughout the study area to improve weekday P.M. peak hour operating conditions. Improvements at individual intersections (such as right-turn pocket and signal timings changes) near the proposed project would not substantially upgrade the operations of the study intersections, since the heavy traffic is destined for the freeways and backs up at the intersections when the freeways and ramps are congested. Improvement measures at individual intersections have not been proposed as they would provide little change in the service levels.

As also noted in the previous response, to help mitigate the potentially significant impacts of the proposed project to the Year 2015 cumulative conditions, the project sponsor has been requested to make a \$50,000 contribution to the ITMS program.

The cumulative transportation analysis does assume growth consistent with other plans in the area (see response # 17).

Comment #19

“The EIR does not factor in the impact on traffic caused by hotel patrons and local workers who will be ‘circling’ in order to find a parking space. The impact on traffic in the area will likely be even more significant than suggested in the EIR. The EIR addresses traffic flow for the intersections near the project, but fails to address the corner on which the project will be located (Howard at 5th Street). There is no specific information of the impact of pedestrian traffic at the Howard and 5th Street intersection.” (Joe Chmielewski)

Response #19

As stated on page 79 in the Draft EIR, the proposed project would displace the existing 100-space private parking lot on the proposed project site and would have a shortfall of 113 parking spaces for the hotel, retail, restaurant and residential components. Overall, the proposed project would result in a total parking shortfall of 213 parking spaces.

Currently, surveys show that public off-street parking in the study area operates at about 84 percent of capacity during the weekday midday, with almost 1,000 parking spaces available during this time period. A portion of the 213-space shortfall could be accommodated in the nearby vicinity including tandem parking for approximately 115 vehicles in the below grade parking garage at the adjacent Wells Fargo Data building owned by the proposed project sponsor. It is unlikely there would be extensive “circling” to find a parking space by hotel patrons and employees.

The DEIR did have the intersection of Fifth/Howard as one that was examined (see pages 68 and 69 and page 78). The intersection of Fifth/Howard was projected to operate at LOS D under Existing plus Project conditions. The additional traffic generated by the proposed project would

not cause any individual turning movements at the intersection to operate with unacceptable conditions.

The proposed project would generate around 400 pedestrian trips during the weekday PM peak hour. These include walk trips to and from the proposed project's hotel, retail, residential and restaurant uses, plus walk trips to and from nearby parking facilities and transit operators. Since most of the available parking spaces and transit connections are located north of the proposed project site (e.g., Fifth & Mission Garage, Market Street), it is anticipated that most of the pedestrian trips generated by the proposed project would use the Fifth Street sidewalk adjacent to the building. At this location, the sidewalk would be about 10 feet wide.

Currently, pedestrian conditions in the vicinity of the proposed project site are generally satisfactory. Due to ongoing construction of the adjacent Moscone West expansion, accurate pedestrian counts could not be conducted on the Fifth Street and Howard Street sidewalks. Based on the theoretical capacity of the sidewalks (taking into consideration the sidewalk width and obstructions), however, it is anticipated that the addition of proposed project-generated pedestrian trips would not substantially affect sidewalk operations.

Comment #20

"The construction will also create traffic chaos in an area that has recently seen far too much construction activity." (Alan Blackwood)

Response #20

Construction of the proposed project is scheduled to begin in Summer 2002 and be completed in Summer of 2004. According to the proposed project sponsor, construction of the proposed project would probably not result in the closure of any regular travel lanes, although pedestrian access could be restricted adjacent to the proposed project. To accommodate construction staging and to provide a temporary pedestrian walkway, the parking lanes along Fifth Street and Howard Street would be closed throughout the construction duration. Although the closure of the parking lane on Howard Street would result in the temporary elimination of a weekday P.M. peak period travel

lane (the on-street parking has a tow-away restriction from 4:00 to 7:00 P.M.), this lane is already closed by construction activities at the Moscone West expansion

The Moscone West expansion is anticipated to be completed by Spring 2003. Construction of the Moscone West expansion and the proposed project would overlap for about one year.

In general, construction-related impacts are not considered significant within the context of CEQA due to their temporary and limited duration. Based on the proposed project's number of construction-related trucks and construction employees, any impacts on the roadway network would be similar to, or less than, those associated with the Moscone West expansion.

The proposed project sponsor and construction contractor(s) would meet with the City Interdepartment Staff Committee on Traffic and Transportation (ISCOTT), Department of Parking and Traffic, Department Public Works, the Fire Department, Muni and the Planning Department to determine feasible improvement measures to reduce potential traffic congestion. In addition, the proposed project sponsor would work with the various City agencies to develop a coordinated plan and schedule to address the potential overlap with construction at the Moscone West and Emporium Site projects.

Comment #21

"Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation in the environmental review process for the [referenced] project. We have examined the DEIR and have the following comments:

"(1) Please be sure to submit at least two copies of a construction schedule for the proposed project to the Department of Transportation at the earliest possible time to ensure that there are no conflicts with the ongoing San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge (SFOBB) west approach and ramp retrofit project.

"(2) Finally, should there be a need to perform any work or traffic control within the State right-of-way (ROW), please note that such activities will require an encroachment permit. To apply for an encroachment permit all applicants are required to submit a completed application with appropriate environmental documentation and five sets of plans (in metric units) which also show State ROW to the [address provided]." (Jean Finney, State of California Department of Transportation)

Response #21

The comment is noted. At this time, it is not anticipated that any work would need to be performed within any State right-of-way.

ParkingComment #22

"They also note in the Draft EIR -- which I do agree with, and it is not mitigated -- which is part of the problem -- a shortfall of 213 parking spaces. The current parking lot is 100 spaces. There is also a shortfall of 213 spaces." (Quintin Mecke, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition)

"Just what San Francisco needs; this thing is sticking out like a sore thumb: more cars; the parking doesn't even address the needs of the building itself, let alone that it is taking away a parking lot that's there.

"We're talking 300 or 400 more cars circling around 5th Street; 5th and Howard. Just circling. I don't think that's addressed in the environmental report." (Ron Groshardt, 6th Street Agenda)

"I would just like more information on the shortfall of 213 parking spaces." (Commissioner Baltimore, San Francisco Planning Commission)

"The proposed hotel will be built upon a much-used South of Market parking lot yet the EIR does not address the replacement of these parking spaces. The impact on parking in the area will likely be far more significant than is suggested in the report. (The report acknowledges that the proposed parking structure contained within the hotel would not meet the demand generated by the hotel.)" (Joe Chmielewski)

Response #22

As stated in Response #19, the proposed project would result in a total parking shortfall of 213 parking spaces. It is projected that there would be public off-street parking in the study area with almost 1,000 parking spaces available during the weekday midday. The hotel and residential parking demand would typically occur overnight, during which time additional parking spaces would be available on-street and in the nearby public parking facilities.

In general, the creation of a parking demand that cannot be met by existing or proposed parking facilities is a social effect and would not, in and of itself, be considered an environmental effect. Parking deficits may be an inconvenience to drivers, but are not considered significant physical impacts on the environment. Faced with parking shortages, drivers generally seek and find alternative parking facilities further away, or shift modes of travel. As such, no parking mitigation

measures are required, or were developed. The following improvement measures are proposed to reduce the potential parking shortfall of the proposed project in the Draft EIR on page 81: (a) make arrangements at a nearby parking facility to provide a certain number of overnight parking spaces for hotel guest and residents; (b), inform prospective residential tenants that the proposed project includes limited parking; (c), provide reduced-rate or free transit passes for retail/restaurant/hotel employees; and (d), provide on-site transit information.

Pedestrian Safety

Comment #23

“The DEIR brazenly fails to note Yerba Buena is home to a large senior community of 1,800+ elderly and disabled persons. A list of these residents is attached [see project file 2000.0790E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, Fifth Floor]. Even worse, it utterly fails to provide any data and analyses of pedestrian/traffic safety issues and impacts, including cumulative impacts. These are crucial issues for the elderly who are especially vulnerable regarding safety impacts. In fact, Fifth and Howard has been identified as already being an extremely dangerous intersection. The traffic/pedestrian safety conditions, accident statistics, etc., of all Fifth Street intersections north of I-80 must be fully documented in the EIR and cumulative impacts identified in order for the EIR to be legally adequate.

“Given the known hazardous intersection and the major increase in activity the project will generate here, the data will support a finding of significant impact with regard to pedestrian safety. A full mitigation program must be included. It is clear, for example, that the sidewalks along Fifth Street will need to be further widened than proposed due to the special needs of local elderly/disabled residents, many of whom are mobility impaired and use wheelchairs and other assistive devices. Corner sidewalk bulbs, red light cameras, etc., may all be necessary to adequately mitigate this impact.

“Please be advised that this is a matter that is so serious for our Consortium and its members that failure to fully address these impacts and mitigations in the EIR will lead to certain litigation.” (John Elberling, The Yerba Buena Consortium)

Response #23

The commenter correctly notes that there is a substantial senior community in the greater Yerba Buena Area. The Draft EIR concluded that the proposed project would not have any significant impacts to the existing pedestrian conditions, since it would not result in substantial overcrowding, create potentially hazardous conditions, or interfere with pedestrian accessibility.

Adjacent to the proposed project site, the sidewalks on the north side of Howard Street and the east side of Fifth Street are both 10 feet wide. With the proposed project, the Howard Street sidewalk would be widened to 12 feet wide at the corner of Fifth and Howard Street in between the structural columns. During field visits, it was observed that pedestrian conditions are generally acceptable in the vicinity of the proposed project. Pedestrian volumes are highest along Market and Mission Streets, and are lower along the streets to the south. The additional pedestrian trips generated by the proposed project during the weekday P.M. peak hour would not substantially affect sidewalk or crosswalk operations.

As noted above, it is anticipated that the addition of project-generated pedestrian trips along Fifth and Howard Streets would not substantially affect sidewalk operations. All Fifth Street intersections north of I-80 have pedestrian "WALK/DON'T WALK" indicators. In addition, the intersection of Fourth/Mission has pedestrian countdown signals, and the intersections of Fourth/Folsom and Fourth/Howard have all-pedestrian phases. The signalization plans for these intersections was designed by DPT to provide sufficient time for pedestrians to safely cross the streets.

It should be noted that if the sidewalks on Fifth Street were to be widened in the future, the additional width would need to be taken from the street right-of-way, since all buildings are built to the property line. A reduction in the width of the street would potentially affect traffic, transit, parking and bicycle conditions. In addition, widening sidewalks on Fifth Street would not be beneficial to pedestrians unless it were performed for the entire length of the street (and not on a single lot basis). Similarly, implementation of assistive devices would be most beneficial if installed throughout an entire area, not at just one intersection. Any pedestrian improvements to Fifth Street would need to be studied and implemented by DPT and DPW.

The Department of Parking and Traffic has instituted several initiatives to enhance pedestrian safety throughout the City, including the SaFe Streets and Livable Streets programs. The Department's Livable Streets effort focuses on traffic and pedestrian safety issues and consists of four programs: Traffic Calming, Pedestrian, School Area Safety, and Red Light Photo

Enforcement. In addition, the Department has hired a pedestrian coordinator to oversee existing and future pedestrian facilities and enhancements.

Mitigation

Comment #24

“How do you mitigate for the increased traffic; increased pedestrian safety problems; what have you?”
(Quintin Mecke, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition)

Response #24

Impacts associated with a new proposed project are determined on an existing-plus-project basis. The Draft EIR concluded that the proposed project would have no significant impacts on existing traffic conditions, since it would not cause intersections to deteriorate to unacceptable conditions, and would have no significant impacts on existing pedestrian conditions, since it would not result in substantial overcrowding, create potentially hazardous conditions, or interfere with pedestrian accessibility. As such, no traffic or pedestrian mitigations were proposed or required. As noted in Response #2, the Draft EIR concluded on page 101 that the proposed project would have potentially unavoidable significant cumulative impacts in the area of traffic. The proposed project sponsor would contribute \$50,000 to DPT’s new ITMS program to help mitigate the proposed project’s contribution to future intersection operating conditions (see Response #17).

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Comment #25

“I’m looking specifically at Page A-23 of the Draft Environmental Impact Report, under the paragraph ‘The San Francisco General Plan Community Safety Element’ -- the third paragraph, where it states that “The project site is also located in an area of liquefaction potential, in a Seismic Hazards Study Zone designated by the California Division of Mines and Geology” -- and so on.

“And then the next paragraph starts, “To ensure compliance with all San Francisco Building Code provisions regarding structural safety, when DBI [Department of Building Inspection] reviews the geotechnical report and building plans for the proposed project, it will determine necessary engineering and design features for the project, to reduce potential damage to structures” -- one being that I would like to -- for the Environmental Impact Report to take a look at -- would be based on the area -- the liquefaction potential of the area -- the fact that a majority of the area has landfill; that perhaps a geotechnical report be procured before we get that far; that the geotechnical report try to establish what will be potential hazards,

either technically or because of the landfill situation, for that particular parcel, or for the fact that the ground water level in that area is fairly shallow.” (Commissioner Lim, San Francisco Planning Commission)

“I want to clarify for the record that on page A-23, that the Environmental Impact Report doesn’t address geology and soils. I believe that’s the Building Department. You know, it is pursuant to the Building Code for them to implement; I just wanted to say that.” (Commissioner Theoharis, San Francisco Planning Commission)

Response #25

The Draft EIR and the Initial Study reviewed the geology of the proposed project site and concluded that there are no potentially significant impacts from the proposed project that could have an adverse environmental effect on the geology and soils of the site. The *San Francisco Building Code* has strict requirements regarding the seismic safety of new buildings. The structural design of the proposed project building would have to comply with the *Building Code* and the City Department of Building Inspection would review the plans to insure that the building would be constructed with the state-of-the art measures to minimize potential damage to the structure in the case of a seismic event.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Comment #26

“Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 888 Howard Street Hotel and Residential Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (SCH# 2001082014). As you may be aware, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) oversees the cleanup of sites where hazardous substances have been released pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.8. As a Resource Agency, DTSC is submitting comments to ensure that the environmental documentation prepared for this project to address the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) adequately addresses any required remediation activities which may be required to address any hazardous substances release.

“The Phase I and Preliminary Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) performed by Treadwell and Rollo, August 2000, provide a site history and some soil sampling for site assessment. The samples were analyzed for total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH), BTEX, MTBE, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), total lead and LUFT 5 metals. However, steps should be taken to provide a more thorough assessment. The former site uses include a carriage company, stables, and greenhouses. Based on this information, we suggest analytical testing include a pesticide analysis.

"Soil sampling was performed to 15 feet in the landscaped area and greater than 90 feet below the pavement. Based on the planned excavation depth of 28 feet, we recommend that sampling be representative of the entire depth to be excavated. The groundwater has been determined to lie between 22-27 feet below ground surface. It seems plausible that contact will be made with groundwater during the excavation process. If groundwater is contaminated with hazardous substances, it will need to be addressed as part of this project.

"The ESA Discussion and Conclusions section indicates the intent to transport, store, and treat contaminated soil at the site. In order to comply with California Health and Safety Code, permits that facilitate the disposal, transportation, and storage of hazardous substances must be obtained from the proper authority.

"DTSC can assist your agency in overseeing characterization and cleanup activities through our Voluntary Cleanup Program. A fact sheet describing this program is attached [See Appendix Attachment]. We are aware that projects such as this one are typically on a compressed schedule, and in an effort to use the available review time efficiently, we request that DTSC be included in any meetings where issues relevant to our statutory authority are discussed.

"DTSC is administering the \$85 million Urban Cleanup Loan Program, which will provide low-interest loans to investigate and cleanup hazardous materials at properties where redevelopment is likely to have a beneficial impact to a community. The program is composed of two main components: low interest loans of up to \$100,000 to conduct preliminary endangerment assessments of underutilized properties; and loans of up to \$2.5 million for the cleanup or removal of hazardous materials also at underutilized urban properties. These loans are available to developers, businesses, schools, and local governments. A fact sheet regarding this program is attached for your information. [See Appendix Attachment]" (Barbara Cook, Department of Toxic Substances Control)

Response #26

The comment is noted. Treadwell and Rollo, the authors of The Phase I and Preliminary Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) referenced by the commenter, believe that the sampling depths for the soils analysis are adequate since the soil from 15 to 28 feet below the surface is dune sand and clay and it is relatively clean.² The excavated soil would be retested for the presence of hazardous materials and would include a pesticide analysis. If groundwater were encountered during excavation for the project, it would have to be tested and special permits would be required for any discharge into the City's sanitary sewer system. The proposed project contractor would obtain the appropriate permits to comply with the *California Health and Safety Code*. The Department of Toxic Substances Control will be included in any meetings where issues relevant to their statutory authority are discussed.

² Peter Cusack, Treadwell & Rollo, telephone conversation November 9, 2001.

GROWTH

Comment #27

“In looking at the Draft EIR where the Continental project is found, it is kind of hard to imagine that on Page 94 it is given that there is a basis for the assumption that there are no significant impacts as far as long-term growth, or the encouragement of growth in the neighborhood; sort of a ‘neg-dec’ on the idea.

“We’re currently looking at two and a half times increase in height, in both from what it is currently zoned, from 160 feet to 400 feet, and in the Draft EIR I think that does encourage this rezoning; upzoning; a level of growth that isn’t acknowledged in the Draft EIR, and that needs to be looked into, and how that actually affects local businesses that are currently in that surrounding area, as well as the low-income community on 6th Street, which is a block away.” (Quintin Mecke, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition)

Response #27

The proposed project would comply with the uses projected in the *General Plan* for the C-3 Downtown area and the *YBC Redevelopment Plan*. The South of Market Area has experienced a surge of economic activity in the past decade that has brought an increase of businesses, new jobs for workers and new residents. The area is experiencing change and the City has responded to this change by a review of the demand for industrial space in the area and the development of the South of Market Project Area Plan and Mid-Market Survey Area Plan as noted in Comment #7. The proposed project would not foster population growth nor the construction of additional housing nor remove obstacles to population growth and therefore would not be considered “growth inducing.” The proposed project would be part of the continued change in the South of Market area and would not in and of itself induce new growth.

See Response #2 for concerns related to the economic considerations of local business and the social impacts on the nearby low-income community.

Comment #28

“We’re with the 6th Street Agenda; we’re a low-income SRO organizing advocacy project, and I know the position here today is not to take a position. However, the old saying is you can’t remain neutral on a moving train. And either we begin to derail this project now, as a growing diverse coalition emerges, or we will be compelled to ride the rails of resistance until the wheels fall off.

"Contextually, you know, everything seems to be blamed on 6th Street residents right now: the mess on Market. I'm even wondering if they are going to blame who shot Kennedy on 6th Street residents, but I think people know better.

"In relation to the EIR, I think it is shameless; it is shoddy; it is irresponsible; it is insensitive; it is a charade of a document. The impacts on the community aren't even examined here. Historically it is an area that suffers severe displacement, very much like the Fillmore.

"These growth impacts aren't even being considered, as the boom in building plans that Jenny talked about has hit hard in the area. There is no need to worry about the shark-mauling incidents at beaches and resorts nationwide, because there is a shark feeding frenzy going on in this area right now. So of course those of us who organize and work with the low-income community are opposed to this EIR, and Continental officials mistakenly are believing that poor people can't pay attention.

"Well, they are paying attention, and they know what time it is.

"So I think we have to push for a community-based comprehensive planning, and not parcel-by-parcel corporate giveaways." (Richard Marquez, 6th Street Agenda)

Response #28

The comment is noted. See Responses #8 and #9 with respect to community based planning. The growth inducing impacts of the proposed project were addressed on page 94 of the Draft EIR. Section 15126.2(d) of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines states that the EIR should "*discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth ... Increase the population that may tax existing community service facilities, requiring the construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects... and encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.*"

In general, a project would be considered growth-inducing if its implementation would result in substantial population increases and/or new development that might not occur if the proposed project were not approved and implemented. The proposed project would replace an existing surface parking lot with a mixed use building containing hotel, residential, and retail uses. This would intensify the use of the site, but would not be expected to substantially alter development patterns in the South of Market area or elsewhere in San Francisco. The proposed project site is

in an urbanized area that is intensively developed and that already supports substantial amounts of hotel, residential, cultural, and commercial development in surrounding blocks.

The proposed project is located in an urban area and would not necessitate or induce the extension of municipal infrastructure. In view of the above, there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed project would result in additional development in the proposed project site vicinity that would not otherwise occur.

Comment #29

"Because the DEIR does not present cumulative information on the planned South of Market and Mid-Market Redevelopment projects and rezonings, it is impossible to ascertain the project's potential growth-inducing impacts. However, it is clear that such a dramatic upzoning as proposed for this project would, if approved, potentially set a precedent for other nearby properties to also request spot upzoning. What are the 'soft sites' that might in fact be so affected by such growth inducement? Reportedly the owners of the Pickwick Hotel have already discussed such a spot upzoning with DCP [Department of City Planning] -- this must be fully disclosed by DCP in the EIR. Are there others in this area? These potential 'soft sites' that may be proposed for spot upzoning if this upzoning is approved must be identified and their potential cumulative impacts described, including urban design.

"While economic impact data may be presented in EIR's per CEQA, it is not legally required. However, in this case the project's potential growth-inducing impacts could further the very serious 'gentrification' that is being experienced in SOMA -- both commercial and residential. The DEIR should thus fully discuss this issue and evaluate the project's potential impacts in furthering gentrification in SOMA. Please be advised that failure to do so will lead to certain appeal of the project EIR's certification to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors." (John Elberling, The Yerba Buena Consortium)

Response #29

As noted, the proposed project is not requesting a new use be introduced to the project area. The *General Plan* and the *Planning Code* allow for hotel (above 200 rooms requires a conditional use authorization), retail, restaurant, residential and parking uses. The change in the Zoning Map and the SU overlay would allow the height, bulk and FAR for the proposed project site to increase. The proposed project would not induce growth to an area of the City which is already experiencing considerable economic change. It would be speculative to assume that a permitted use in any area undergoing substantial change could be quantified as to its presumed contribution to gentrification.

A property owner can request a zoning change from the Planning Commission. However, the Commission must review each request in the context of the existing land use plans and policies, zoning controls, and appropriateness of any change. Changes in height and density for certain uses have been granted in other parts of the City, and the proposed project is not unique in making such a request. Thus, it would not be a precedent for the Planning Commission to grant the change for the proposed project.

No application has been received by the Planning Department for the Pickwick Hotel. It is beyond the scope of the DEIR and CEQA to engage in speculation regarding what other sites in the proposed project area may be redeveloped and in doing so might seek exceptions to the code ("soft-sites" referenced by the commenter").

ALTERNATIVES

Comment #30

"CEQA and well-established case law absolutely require that credible project alternatives to the proposed project [be] fully considered. The alternative analysis presented is limited to only one such alternative -- the 'as of right' project permitted today without the proposed spot upzoning. And the information on that alternative that is presented is utterly incomplete, with virtually no data analyses presented on all the above topics, nor any table of comparisons between the proposed project and the alternatives. This does not comply with legal requirements and could never withstand a legal challenge. The CEQA case law in this regard is very, very well established and clear.

"At least one other fully detailed project alternative is needed for legal adequacy; a 29-story hotel-only project, that would lessen the various impacts of the project with regard to urban design, growth inducement, etc. This would include graphics showing its visual appearance in the cityscape such as the many presented for the proposed project so the two can be fully compared. It would also include wind and shadow impact analysis for comparison. We understand that in fact this smaller project was the developer's original proposed to DCP, and that it was DCP staff's proposed for a larger project with condos to be developed instead. Thus it is legally indefensible for DCP to fail to fully evaluate this smaller alternative upzoning/development. Please be advised that failure to correct this will lead to certain appeal of the project EIR's certification to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors." (John Elberling, The Yerba Buena Consortium)

Response #30

The Public Resources Code and CEQA Guidelines state that a DEIR should describe a range of alternatives that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of a project while attaining most of the project objectives (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6). The Draft EIR's discussion in the Alternatives Chapter, pages 104 to 111, set out the No Project Alternative (a requirement of CEQA) and then focused on comparing and contrasting two variants of a code-complying alternative against the proposed project. One of the variants was a lesser intensity project that was still a mixed-use project with residential along with the hotel component and ancillary retail uses; the other was a hotel-only project. Table 5 below is a comparison of the proposed project and the Alternative B Variants.

Table 5 Comparison of Proposed Project and Alternative B Variants			
	Proposed Project	Variant 1	Variant 2
Height	400 feet	160 feet	160 feet
Number of Stories	39 stories	16 stories	16 stories
Number Hotel Rooms	500 rooms	225 rooms	225 rooms
Number Res. Units	67	none	none
Restaurant	4,000 sq. ft.	4,000 sq. ft.	none
Retail	1,000 sq. ft.	1,000 sq. ft.	none
Meeting and Conference Space	42,000 sq. ft.	15,000 sq. ft.	15,000 sq. ft.

The discussion in the Draft EIR then looked at both the variants and stated the differences between the variants and the proposed project such for each of the environmental areas analyzed in the document. Table 6, on the following page, is a comparison of the environmental effects of the variants to the proposed project.

As stated in the Draft EIR on page 110, the Alternative B-2 was found to have less than a significant contribution to cumulative transportation impacts at the intersection of Howard and Fifth Streets avoiding the significant cumulative impact in transportation which is the result of the proposed project. Alternative B-2 was also found to be the environmentally superior alternative although it does not meet all of the project's sponsor's objectives.

A 29-story alternative identified by the commenter would generate fewer impacts than the proposed project, but would still have a potentially significant effect on cumulative traffic in the Year 2015 and for that reason was not analyzed in the Draft EIR.

Table 6
Comparison of Environmental Effects to the Proposed Project

	Variant A	Variant B
Code Exceptions	none	none
Land Use	fewer	fewer
Visual Quality	fewer	fewer
Population	fewer	fewer
Transportation	fewer	fewer
Noise	fewer	fewer
Air Quality/Shadows/Wind	fewer	fewer
Utilities/Public Services	fewer	fewer
Biology	same	same
Geology/Topography	same	same
Water	same	same
Energy	fewer	fewer
Hazards	same	same
Cultural	same	same

OTHER ISSUES

Comment #31

"[The Yerba Buena] Consortium has worked for the last 20 years to advance the interests of the 1,800+ low-income elders living in the Yerba Buena Neighborhood, to assure the creation of a complete residential community as one vital part of the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Project, and to secure the maximum benefit from Yerba Buena's enormous resources to the needs of the Central City's low-income population, especially residents of the South of Market.

"The DEIR for 888 Howard Street is grossly inadequate in several major aspects, and fails to meet the legal requirements of CEQA. Please be advised that failure to correct the following deficiencies will lead to certain appeal of the project EIR's certification to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

"Overall this DEIR presents a picture of a subservient Environment Review Office at the Department of City Planning that sees the developer as its true client rather than the people of Yerba Buena, SOMA and the City of San Francisco. This is unconscionable. In its response to these and other comments, the Department has one last chance to demonstrate its credibility." (John Elberling, The Yerba Buena Consortium)

Response #31

The comment is noted. The Department respectfully disagrees with the conclusions drawn by this commenter.

E. APPENDICES

1. Comment Letters
2. Transcript from Public Hearing

1. Comment Letters



Gray Davis
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse



Steve Nissen
DIRECTOR

September 18, 2001

RECEIVED

SEP 20 2001

PLANNING DEPT

Joan A. Kugler
San Francisco Planning Department
1660 Mission Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94103

Subject: 888 Howard Street Hotel and Residential Development (2000.790E)
SCH#: 2001082014

Dear Joan A. Kugler:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on September 17, 2001, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts
Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures
cc: Resources Agency

Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH# 2001082014
Project Title 888 Howard Street Hotel and Residential Development (2000.790E)
Lead Agency San Francisco Planning Department

Type EIR Draft EIR
Description The project would be the construction of a 39-story hotel and residential building of approximately 630,000 sq.ft. with two levels of below-grade parking on the northeast corner of Fifth and Howard Streets. The 37,860 sq.ft. site contains an existing surface parking lot with landscaping which is used by the adjacent Wells Fargo Bank Data Center. The hotel portion of the proposed project would contain about 500 rooms along with ancillary support uses such as meeting rooms, restaurants, and retail space. Above the hotel there would be 60-70 residential condominiums. The hotel entryway would be on Howard St. while a separate residential entrance would be from Fifth Street. There are two loading docks planned with entrances from Howard Street.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Joan A. Kugler
Agency San Francisco Planning Department
Phone 415 558-5983 **Fax**
email
Address 1660 Mission Street, Suite 500
City San Francisco **State** CA **Zip** 94103

Project Location

County San Francisco
City San Francisco
Region
Cross Streets Corner of 5th and Howard Streets
Parcel No. Block 3724 - Lot 66
Township **Range** **Section** **Base** USGS SF

Proximity to:

Highways 80 and 101
Airports
Railways
Waterways San Francisco Bay
Schools
Land Use The project site is in the high-density, urban core of the City and County of San Francisco within the South of Market area. The lot is currently occupied by a bank and a private parking lot used by bank employees. With the proposed subdivision, the site would be divided and the parking lot would be developed with the proposed project. The site is within the C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) zoning district and is within the 160F Height and Bulk district. The Downtown Area Plan Element of the General Plan for San Francisco shows this area as Downtown Service.

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Air Quality; Traffic/Circulation; Growth Inducing; Landuse; Other Issues; Cumulative Effects

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Conservation; Department of Fish and Game, Region 3; Office of Historic Preservation; Caltrans, District 4; Integrated Waste Management Board; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 2; Department of Toxic Substances Control; Native American Heritage Commission; State Lands Commission; Department of Parks and Recreation

Date Received 08/03/2001 **Start of Review** 08/03/2001 **End of Review** 09/17/2001



Department of Toxic Substances Control



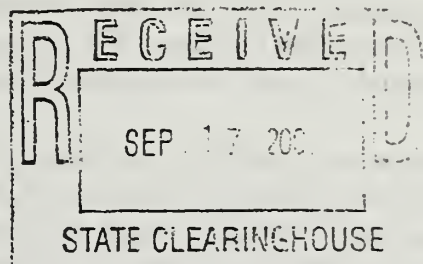
Edwin F. Lowry, Director
700 Heinz Avenue, Suite 200
Berkeley, California 94710-2721

Don H. Hickox
Deputy Secretary
California Environmental
Protection Agency

Gray Davis
Governor

September 12, 2001

Paul E. Maltzer
Environmental Review Officer
San Francisco Planning Department
1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103



Dear Mr. Maltzer:

*Clear
9/17/01*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 888 Howard Street Hotel and Residential Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (SCH# 2001082014). As you may be aware, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) oversees the cleanup of sites where hazardous substances have been released pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.8. As a Resource Agency, DTSC is submitting comments to ensure that the environmental documentation prepared for this project to address the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) adequately addresses any required remediation activities which may be required to address any hazardous substances release.

The Phase I and Preliminary Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) performed by Treadwell and Rollo, August 2000, provide a site history and some soil sampling for site assessment. The samples were analyzed for total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH), BTEX, MTBE, volatile organic compounds (VOC's), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOC's), total lead and LUFT 5 metals. However, steps should be taken to provide a more thorough assessment. The former site uses include a carriage company, stables, and greenhouses. Based on this information, we suggest analytical testing include a pesticide analysis.

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Mr. Paul E. Maltzer
September 12, 2001
page 2

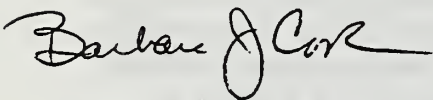
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DTSC can assist your agency in overseeing characterization and cleanup activities through our Voluntary Cleanup Program. A fact sheet describing this program is enclosed. We are aware that projects such as this one are typically on a compressed schedule, and in an effort to use the available review time efficiently, we request that DTSC be included in any meetings where issues relevant to our statutory authority are discussed.

DTSC is administering the \$85 million Urban Cleanup Loan Program, which will provide low-interest loans to investigate and cleanup hazardous materials at properties where redevelopment is likely to have a beneficial impact to a community. The program is composed of two main components: low interest loans of up to \$100,000 to conduct preliminary endangerment assessments of underutilized properties; and loans of up to \$2.5 million for the cleanup or removal of hazardous materials also at underutilized urban properties. These loans are available to developers, businesses, schools, and local governments. A fact sheet regarding this program is attached for your information.

Please contact Jonathan Largent at (510) 540-3836 if you have any questions or would like to schedule a meeting. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,



Barbara J. Cook, P.E., Chief
Northern California - Coastal Cleanup
Operations Branch

Enclosures

cc: next page

Mr. Paul E. Maltzer
September 12, 2001
page 3

Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Guenther Moskat
CEQA Tracking Center
Department of Toxic Substances Control
P.O. Box 806
Sacramento, California 95812-0806

**California Environmental
Protection Agency**



DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL

The Voluntary Cleanup Program

In 1993, the California Environmental Protection Agency's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) introduced this streamlined program to protect human health and the environment, ensure investigation and cleanup is conducted in an environmentally sound manner and facilitate the reuse and redevelopment of these same properties. Using this program, corporations, real estate developers, other private parties, and local and state agencies entering into Voluntary Cleanup Program agreements will be able to restore properties quickly and efficiently, rather than having their projects compete for DTSC's limited resources with other lower-priority hazardous waste sites. This fact sheet describes how the Voluntary Cleanup Program works.

Prior to initiation of the Voluntary Cleanup Program, project proponents had few options for DTSC involvement in cleaning up low-priority sites. DTSC's statutory mandate is to identify, prioritize, investigate and cleanup sites where releases of hazardous substances have occurred. For years, the mandate meant that, if the site presented grave threat to public health or the environment, then it was listed on the State Superfund list and the parties responsible conducted the cleanup under an enforcement order, or DTSC used state funds to do so. Because of staff resource limitations, DTSC was unable to provide oversight at sites which posed lesser risk or had lower priority.

DTSC long ago recognized that no one's interests are served by leaving sites contaminated and unusable. The Voluntary Cleanup Program allows motivated parties who are able to fund the cleanup – and DTSC's oversight – to move ahead at their own speed to investigate and remediate their sites. DTSC has found that working cooperatively with willing and able project proponents is a more efficient and cost-effective approach to site investigation and cleanup. There are four steps to this process:

- ✓ Eligibility and Application
- ✓ Negotiating the Agreement
- ✓ Site Activities
- ✓ Certification and Property Restoration

The rest of this fact sheet describes those steps and gives DTSC contacts.

August 1999

The Voluntary Cleanup Program

Step 1: Eligibility and Application

Most sites are eligible. The main exclusions are if the site is listed as a Federal or State Superfund site, is a military facility, or if it falls outside of DTSC's jurisdiction, as in the case where a site contains only leaking underground fuel tanks. Another possible limitation is if another agency currently has oversight, e.g. a county (for underground storage tanks). The current oversight agency must consent to transfer the cleanup responsibilities to DTSC before the proponent can enter into a Voluntary Cleanup Program agreement. Additionally, DTSC can enter into an agreement to work on a specified element of a cleanup (risk assessment or public participation, for example), if the primary oversight agency gives its consent. The standard application is attached to this fact sheet.

If neither of these exclusions apply, the proponent submits an application to DTSC, providing details about site conditions, proposed land use and potential community concerns. No fee is required to apply for the Voluntary Cleanup Program.



Jack London Square Theater, Oakland: Under the Voluntary Cleanup Program, a nine-screen theater was built atop a former Pacific Gas & Electric town gas site, creating a regional entertainment hub.

Step 2: Negotiating the Agreement

Once DTSC accepts the application, the proponent meets with experienced DTSC professionals to negotiate the agreement. The agreement can range from services for an initial site assessment, to oversight and certification of a full site cleanup, based on the proponent's financial and scheduling objectives.

The Voluntary Cleanup Program agreement specifies the estimated DTSC costs, project scheduling, and DTSC services provided. Because every project must meet the same legal and technical cleanup requirements as State Superfund sites, and because DTSC staff provide oversight, the proponent is assured that the project will be completed in an environmentally sound manner.

August 1999



Romero Ranch, Santa Nella: A Voluntary Cleanup Agreement enabled the Nature Conservancy to use the land to preserve natural habitat and promote wildlife development rights.



VOLUNTARY CLEANUP PROGRAM APPLICATION

The purpose of this application is to obtain information necessary to determine the eligibility of the site for acceptance into the Voluntary Cleanup Program. Please use additional pages, as necessary, to complete your responses.

SECTION 1 PROPONENT INFORMATION

Proponent Name			
Principal Contact Name			
	Phone ()		
Address			
Proponent's relationship to site			
Brief statement of why the proponent is interested in DTSC services related to site			

SECTION 2 SITE INFORMATION

Is this site listed on Calsites?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If Yes, provide specific name and number as listed		
Name of Site		
Address	City	County ZIP
(Please attach a copy of an appropriate map page)		

Current Owner		
Name		
Address		
Phone ()		
Background: Previous Business Operations		
Name		
Type		
Years of Operation		
If known, list all previous businesses operating on this property		
What hazardous substances/wastes have been associated with the site?		
What environmental media is/was/may be contaminated?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Soil	<input type="checkbox"/> Air	<input type="checkbox"/> Groundwater
	<input type="checkbox"/> Surface water	
Has sampling or other investigation been conducted?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Specify		
If Yes, what hazardous substances have been detected and what were their maximum concentrations?		

SECTION 2 SITE INFORMATION (continued)

Are any Federal, State or Local regulatory agencies currently involved with the site? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If Yes, state the involvement, and give contact names and telephone numbers

Agency	Involvement	Contact Name	Phone

What is the future proposed use of the site?

What oversight service is being requested of the Department?

- ☐ PEA
 ☐ RI/FS
 ☐ Removal Action
 ☐ Remedial Action
 ☐ RAP
 ☐ Certification
 ☐ Other (describe the proposed project)

Is there currently a potential of exposure of the community or workers to hazardous substances at the site?

- ☐ Yes
 ☐ No
 If Yes, explain

SECTION 3 COMMUNITY PROFILE INFORMATION

Describe the site property (Include approximate size)

Describe the surrounding land use (including proximity to residential housing, schools, churches, etc.)

Describe the visibility of activities on the site to neighbors

SECTION 3 COMMUNITY PROFILE INFORMATION (continued)

What are the demographics of the community (e.g., socioeconomic level, ethnic composition, specific language considerations, etc.)?

Local Interest

Has there been any media coverage?

Past Public Involvement

Has there been any past public interest in the site as reflected by community meetings, ad hoc committees, workshops, fact sheets, newsletters, etc.?

Key Issues and Concerns

Have any specific concerns/issues been raised by the community regarding past operations or present activities at the site?

Are there any concerns/issues anticipated regarding site activities?

Are there any general environmental concerns/issues in the community relative to neighboring sites?

Key Contacts

Please attach a list of key contacts for this site, including: city manager; city planning department; county environmental health department, local elected officials; and any other community members interested in the site. (Please include addresses and phone numbers.)

SECTION 4 CERTIFICATION

The signatories below are authorized representatives of the Project Proponent and certify that the preceding information is true to the best of their knowledge.

Proponent Representative

Date _____

Title

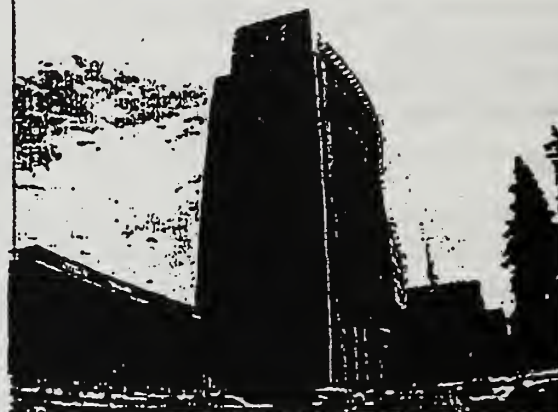
In the agreement, DTSC retains its authority to take enforcement action, if, during the investigation or cleanup, it determines that the site presents a serious health threat, and proper and timely action is not otherwise being taken. The agreement also allows the project proponent to terminate the Voluntary Cleanup Program agreement with 30 days written notice if they are not satisfied that it is meeting their needs.

Step 3: Site Activities

Prior to beginning any work, the proponent must have: signed the Voluntary Cleanup Program agreement; made the advance payment; and committed to paying all project costs, including those associated with DTSC's oversight. The project manager will track the project to make sure that DTSC is on schedule and within budget. DTSC will bill its costs quarterly so that large, unexpected balances should not occur.

Once the proponent and DTSC have entered into a Voluntary Cleanup Program agreement, initial site assessment, site investigation or cleanup activities may begin. The proponent will find that DTSC's staff includes experts in every vital area. The assigned project manager is either a highly qualified Hazardous Substances Scientist or Hazardous Substances Engineer. That project manager has the support of well-trained DTSC toxicologists, geologists, engineers, industrial hygienists, specialists in public participation, and other technical experts.

The project manager may call on any of these specialists to join the team, providing guidance, review, comment and, as necessary, approval of individual documents and other work products. That team will also coordinate with other agencies, as appropriate, and will offer assistance in complying with other laws as needed to complete the project.



The new Federal Courthouse, Sacramento: The largest construction project in the city's history benefited from the Voluntary Cleanup Program when cleaning up a railyard site.

Step 4: Certification and Property Restoration

When remediation is complete, DTSC will issue either a site certification of completion or a "No Further Action" letter, depending on the project circumstances. Either means that what was "The Site," is now property that is ready for redevelopment or other reuse.

August 1999

To learn more about the Voluntary Cleanup Program, contact the DTSC representative in the Regional office nearest you:



DTSC office locations

North Coast California

Lynn Nakashima / Janet Naito
700 Heinz Avenue, Suite 200
Berkeley, California 94710-2721
(510) 540-3839 / (510) 540-3833

Central California

Megan Cambridge
10151 Croydon Way, Suite 3
Sacramento, California 95827
(916) 255-3727

Central California -

Fresno Satellite

Tom Kovac
1515 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, California 93611
(209) 297-3939

Southern California

(Glendale and Cypress)

Rick Jones
1011 Grandview Avenue
Glendale, California 91201
(818) 551-2862

Additional information on the Voluntary Cleanup Program and other DTSC Brownfields initiatives is available on DTSC's internet web page:

<http://www.dtsc.ca.gov>



FACT SHEET
SEPTEMBER 2000

Urban Cleanup Loan Program



Overview

California is on the leading edge when it comes to programs and policies to stimulate the redevelopment of Brownfields – abandoned, idled or under-used properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. Frequently, these properties, once the source of jobs and economic benefits to the entire community, lie abandoned for fear of the contamination and the liability it implies.

The \$85 million Urban Cleanup Loan Program – which is currently under development by the Department of Toxic Substances Control – will provide new financial assistance tools to help developers, businesses, schools and local governments accelerate the pace of cleanup and redevelopment at these sites.

There will be two main components:

Investigating Site Contamination Program

- Provides low-interest loans of up to \$100,000 to conduct preliminary endangerment assessments of underutilized urban properties.
- Loan repayment over a period of two years, if loan recipient buys the property.
- If property is determined not to be economically feasible to purchase, up to 75 percent of the loan amount can be waived by the State.

Cleanup Loans and Environmental Assistance (CLEAN) Program

- Provides low-interest loans of up to \$2.5 million for the cleanup or removal of hazardous materials at properties where redevelopment is likely to have a beneficial impact on the property values, economic viability and quality of life of a community.

Restoring contaminated property can help bring life and strength to a community. Making a once toxic area viable again means more jobs, an enhanced tax base and a sense of optimism about the future. Together, the programs that make up California's Urban Cleanup Loan Program will make it easier for such sites to be redeveloped and become vital, functioning parts of their communities.

For more information, call (916) 324-0706.

5600A Fulton Street,
San Francisco Ca 94121,
September 5, 2001

Paul E. Maltzer,
Environmental Review Officer,
San Francisco Planning Department,
1660 Mission Street,
San Francisco, Ca 94103

RECEIVED
SEP 11 2001
PLANNING DEPT

Dear Sir:

I would like to state my opposition to the hotel being planned for the corner of Fifth and Howard in San Francisco. I feel that the height of 40 stories will totally overwhelm all other structures in the area. Apparently it also exceeds the allowable height of 15 stories. The construction will also create traffic chaos in an area that has recently seen far too much construction activity.

Sincerely,
Alan Blackwood.

RECEIVED

7 September 2001

SEP 1 - 2001
PLANNING DEPT

To: Paul E. Maltzer
Environmental Review Officer

Re: 888 Howard St. Hotel and residential Project

Hi Mr. Maltzer,

I have some problems with the DIER for the proposed Project at 888 Howard St., and those concerns are listed below. I would like to see these issues addressed before the EIR for the project is approved.

I question the appropriateness of the C3-S(cu) overlay to allow residential/ Hotel space to be built in an area zoned for downtown commercial support. The DIER attempts to justify the location of the Project by comparing it in size and bulk to buildings outside of the zoning area in which it will be built. The DEIR also fails to address the displacement of potential PDR space in the C3-S district.

The proposed hotel will be built upon a much-used South of Market parking lot yet the EIR does not address the replacement of these parking spaces. The impact on parking in the area will likely be far more significant than is suggested in the report. (The report acknowledges that the proposed parking structure contained within the hotel would not meet the demand generated by the hotel.)

Furthermore, the EIR does not factor in the impact on traffic caused by hotel patrons and local workers who will be "circling" in order to find a parking space. The impact on traffic in the area will likely be even more significant than suggested in the EIR. The EIR addresses traffic flow for the intersections near the project, but fails to address the corner on which the Project will be located (Howard at 5th St.). There is no specific information of the impact of pedestrian traffic at the Howard and 5th St. intersection.

The proposed hotel is very much out of character with its surrounding urban context. It is continually compared in scale to buildings that exist in the areas zoned for the Downtown Plan, and not compared to the buildings in the C3-S district that it is being built in, or the RESIDENTIAL buildings directly east of the project. To justify the height of the project by saying it won't affect the view corridor for those residents because they live in low rise, high density structures with no view to speak of is...faulty reasoning at best.

While it is true that there are other tall structures nearby (in the blocks surrounding Yerba Buena Gardens), those structures are much more in context with the height and bulk of surrounding buildings. For example, the Marriott Hotel is the last of the tall structures marching down Market Street from the Financial District. The "W" Hotel is surrounded by other tall structures from the blocks around New Montgomery Street. The location of the proposed hotel, however, is quite removed from the tall structures of the Financial District. Instead, it falls on the edge of western SoMa, which is characterized by low structures. The allowed height limit of 160 feet was chosen after much deliberation with the specific intent of maintaining existing urban patterns. A height increase of 240 feet would destroy that integrity.

The height/bulk photomontage is somewhat misleading. The proposed hotel, at 400 feet, is rendered in such a way that it appears almost invisible due to the choice of materials used for its façade. While it is true that the choice of veneer materials can make a big difference in the intrusiveness of a structure, the hotel will arguably have a much greater presence than the illustration implies. A greater effort at rendering this impact should be made. I also look at the rendering of the 15 story alternative photomontage as inadequate – the photos make it look like a windowless, brown pile of rubble.

There is a need for additional community planning guidance. South of Market residents and businesses are beginning to reconcile their various neighborhood concepts under a new plan which will likely call for different zoning guidelines for the eastern and western parts of the district. While the highest and best use of the proposed site is likely a high-rise hotel, without careful district-wide planning, a development of the magnitude proposed right in the middle of SoMa risks doing three things:

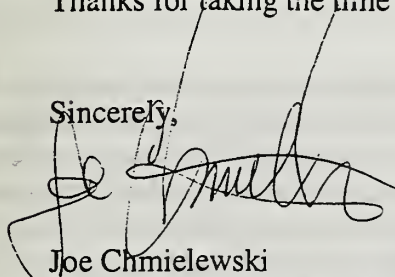
- A. It could define an entirely new urban context unto itself; or
- B. It could destroy the existing neighborhood contexts; or
- C. It could obviate most of the scenarios which have yet to be considered by planners who are taking more than hotel demand into consideration.

It is difficult to see how the decision of whether to build a 15-, 25- or 40- story structure can be made in the absence of a comprehensive planning framework and during such a time of transformation.

We do not consider mitigations to be appropriate tools for addressing the above planning concerns. The overriding impact of this hotel will be: several hundred new hotel rooms and possibly several dozen high-end condominiums. We do not comment on whether there is a market case to be made for these rooms and condos either citywide or regionally or whether the most significant local economic impact of the development (i.e., several hundred service jobs for unskilled and semi-skilled workers) mitigates the environmental impact. We do note, however, that labor is relatively mobile and that if there is a case to be made for more hotel rooms, then the market will create them (and the associated jobs) either at the proposed site or nearby in due course. The presumed market demand for hotel rooms and condos will not evaporate in six months or a year.

Thanks for taking the time to read my concerns.

Sincerely,



Joe Chmielewski
50 Golden Gate Ave. #506
SF, CA 94102

The Yerba Buena Consortium

RECEIVED

182 Howard Street, Suite 519, San Francisco, CA 94105

SEP 14 2001

A Council of Yerba Buena Center's Housing, Health, and Social Service Providers

PLANNING DEPT

Paul E. Maltzer
Environmental Review Officer
Department of City Planning
1660 Mission St.
San Francisco, Ca. 94103

September 7, 2001

RE: 888 Howard Street Hotel 2000.790E
DEIR Comments

Dear Mr. Maltzer:

Our Consortium has worked for the last 20 years to advance the interests of the 1,800+ low-income elders living in the Yerba Buena Neighborhood, to assure the creation of a complete residential community as one vital part of the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Project, and to secure the maximum benefit from Yerba Buena's enormous resources to the needs of the Central City's low-income population, especially residents of the South of Market.

The DEIR for 888 Howard Street is grossly inadequate in several major aspects, and fails to meet the legal requirements of CEQA. Please be advised that failure to correct the following deficiencies will lead to certain appeal of the project EIR's certification to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Specifically:

"Spot Zoning," Cumulative Impacts, Etc.

The proposed project is a classic example of "spot zoning." As a legal matter the very substantial upzoning, master plan amendments, etc. required for the proposed project to thereupon be approvable by separate subsequent action of the Planning Commission are in fact themselves a "project" for which environmental review is required.

The DEIR fails to report, detail, discuss, and cumulatively evaluate the impacts of this spot rezoning combined the two adjacent Redevelopment project plans/rezonings now planned for adoption early next year, each with its own separate EIR. These are the South of Market Project Area Plan Amendment/rezoning, and the Mid-Market Survey Area plan adoption and rezoning. Likewise, the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area's most recent Plan Amendment included important information on cumulative development impacts in that adjacent district. This means that the entire story of proposed development rules, projects, cumulative impacts, etc. for this sector of SOMA is not being told by this DEIR. This is a violation of CEQA requirements for cumulative impact analysis. There is no applicable "program EIR" for this location to provide such analysis. The 1985 Downtown Plan EIR - the last such program EIR for the C3-S District - is hopelessly out of date.

This fundamental legal flaw pervades several sections of the DEIR's analyses. All need correcting. For example, the very important cumulative traffic impact information (Table 2, pg 78), fails to include data on several Sixth Street intersections and all Third Street intersections north of I-80, although both streets are certainly within the local functional grid area of the rezoning/project. Given the projected "E" and "F" levels of service at the nearby intersections that are identified – gridlock – and given the frequent "F" level of service now at Third Street intersections it is legally required to fully document the impact of all the SOMA area's three pending rezonings combined on these vital streets.

Despite the alarming projections of widespread gridlock at these SOMA intersections, there is no credible mitigation program presented. The proposed rezoning project must address this and state the City's intended comprehensive mitigations of the cumulative impacts along with the other SOMA rezonings to meet CEQA requirements. Building project-specific mitigations do not suffice for that purpose. If such mitigation can not be identified, then the project must be determined to have significant cumulative impacts which in fact cannot be mitigated.

Local Setting, Impacts, Etc.

The DEIR brazenly fails to note Yerba Buena is home to a large senior community of 1,800+ elderly and disabled persons. A list of these residences is attached. Even worse, it utterly fails to provide any data and analyses of pedestrian/traffic safety issues and impacts, including cumulative impacts. These are crucial issues for the elderly who are especially vulnerable regarding safety impacts. In fact, Fifth and Howard has been identified as already being an extremely dangerous intersection. The traffic/pedestrian safety conditions, accident statistics, etc., of all Fifth Street intersections north of I-80 must be fully documented in the EIR and cumulative impacts identified in order for the EIR to be legally adequate.

Given the known hazardous intersection and the major increase in activity the project will generate here, the data will support a finding of significant impact with regard to pedestrian safety. A full mitigation program must be included. It is clear, for example, that the sidewalks along Fifth Street will need to be further widened than proposed due to the special needs of local elderly/disabled residents, many of whom are mobility impaired and use wheelchairs and other assistive devices. Corner sidewalk bulbs, red light cameras, etc., may all be necessary to adequately mitigate this impact.

Please be advised that this is a matter that is so serious for our Consortium and its members that failure to fully address these impacts and mitigations in the EIR will lead to certain litigation.

Urban Design and Growth Inducement Impacts

The proposed upzoning and building projects would unquestionably result in a dramatic urban design impact at this location compared to what exists there now and what current zoning now would permit to be built. But the DEIR fails to make a finding of significant impact with regard to urban design. This is legally unacceptable. And thus the DEIR fails to provide mitigation measures to address this significant design impact. These are legally required.

Because the DEIR does not present cumulative information on the planned South of Market and Mid-Market Redevelopment projects and rezonings, it is impossible to ascertain the project's potential growth inducing impacts. However, it is clear that such a dramatic upzoning as proposed for this project would, if approved, potentially set a precedent for other nearby properties to also request spot upzoning. What are the "soft sites" that might in fact be so affected by such growth inducement? Reportedly the owners of the Pickwick Hotel have already discussed such a spot upzoning with DCP - this must be fully disclosed by DCP in the EIR. Are there others in this area? These potential "soft sites" that may be proposed for spot upzoning if this upzoning is approved must be identified and their potential cumulative impacts described, including urban design.

While economic impact data may be presented in EIR's per CEQA, it is not legally required. However in this case the project's potential growth inducing impacts could further the very serious "gentrification" that is being experienced in SOMA - both commercial and residential. The DEIR should thus fully discuss this issue and evaluate the project's potential impacts in furthering gentrification in SOMA. Please be advised that failure to do so will lead to certain appeal of the project EIR's certification to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

Project Alternatives

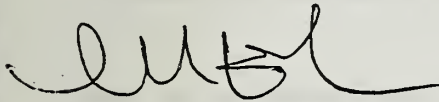
CEQA and well-established case law absolutely require that credible project alternatives to the proposed project be fully considered. The alternative analysis presented is limited to only one such alternative - the "as of right" project permitted today without the proposed spot upzoning. And the information on that alternative that is presented is utterly incomplete, with virtually no data analyses presented on all the above topics, nor any table of comparisons between the proposed project and the alternatives. This does not comply with legal requirements and could never withstand a legal challenge. The CEQA case law in this regard is very, very well established and clear.

At least one other fully detailed project alternative is needed for legal adequacy: a 29 story hotel-only project, that would lessen the various impacts of the project with

regard to urban design, growth inducement, etc. This would include graphics showing its visual appearance in the cityscape such as the many presented for the proposed project so the two can be fully compared. It would also include wind and shadow impact analysis for comparison. We understand that in fact this smaller project was the developer's original proposal to DCP, and that it was DCP staff's proposal for a larger project with condos to be developed instead. Thus it is legally indefensible for DCP to fail to fully evaluate this smaller alternative upzoning/ development. Please be advised that failure to correct this will lead to certain appeal of the project EIR's certification to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

Overall this DEIR presents a picture of a subservient Environmental Review Office at the Department of City Planning that sees the developer as its true client rather than the people of Yerba Buena, SOMA and the City of San Francisco. This is unconscionable. In its response to these and other comments the Department has one last chance to demonstrate its credibility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Elberling', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Elberling
Chair

cc: San Francisco Board of Supervisors Land Use Committee

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

P O BOX 23660
OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660
Tel: (510) 286-4444
Fax: (510) 286-5513
TDD (510) 286-4454



September 17, 2001

SF-080-5.45
SF080099

Mr. Paul E. Maltzer
Environmental Review Officer
San Francisco Planning Department
1660 Mission Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Maltzer:

Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for 888 Howard Street Hotel and Residential Project; City & County of San Francisco

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. We have examined the DEIR and have the following comments:

1. Please be sure to submit at least 2 copies of a construction schedule for the proposed project to the Dept. of Transportation at the earliest possible time to ensure that there are no conflicts with the ongoing San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge (SFOBB) west approach and ramp retrofit project.
2. Finally, should there be a need to perform any work or traffic control within the State right-of-way (ROW), please note that such activities will require an encroachment permit. To apply for an encroachment permit all applicants are required to submit a completed application with appropriate environmental documentation and five (5) sets of plans (in metric units) which also show State ROW to the following address:

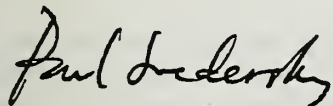
Mr. Sean Nozzari, District Office Chief
Office of Permits
Dept. of Transportation, District 04
P. O. Box 23660
Oakland, Ca 94623-0660


Mr. Paul Maltzer
Sept. 17, 2001
Page 2

Should you require further information or have any questions regarding this letter, please call Nandini N. Shridhar, AICP, of my staff at (510) 622-1642.

Sincerely,

HARRY Y. YAHATA
District Director

By 

 JEAN C. R. FINNEY
District Branch Chief
IGR/CEQA

Date: 9/18/2001 10:30 AM
Sender: "Quintin Mecke" <quintin3@earthlink.net>
To: Paul Maltzer
Priority: Normal
Subject: 888 Howard Street - EIR Comments

Dear Mr. Maltzer:

I understand that comments for this draft EIR should have a technical basis (effect on pedestrian safety, traffic, etc.) but as I am sure you are aware, the community's concerns quite often extend past the technical range.

Along those lines, I have two comments regarding the draft EIR for 888 Howard St.

1.) Would it be possible to have a CEIA (Community Equity Impact Assessment) done? I understand that is a relatively new planning tool that is primarily used for more regional planning such as the Smart Growth Planning for the Bay Area which is being led by ABAG, but I believe that the questions that this tool poses are precisely the ones that must be taken into consideration with regard to this project and others like it. Unfortunately, these questions are nowhere to be found in the draft EIR.

2.) How does the Planning Dept. justify and account for a 25-story upzoning without some comprehensive neighborhood-based planning? Planning cannot and should not take place in a vacuum nor should it be done parcel by parcel such as is the case here. I'm quite sure this is not in the boundaries of the EIR but somewhere along the line there must be responsibility to the idea of actually planning and not going project by project without any study of cumulative effects. This is especially true given the amount of live/work units that have build here in SOMA as well as the (mis)use of the "business services" classification in recent years.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,
Quintin Mecke
Chair, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition
(<http://www.somad.net>)
P.O. Box 191212
SF, CA 94119
(415) 227-9096

<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Transitional//EN">
<HTML><HEAD>
<META http-equiv=Content-Type content="text/html; charset=iso-

RECEIVED

AUG 09 2001
PLANNING DEPT

SUE C. HESTOR

Attorney at Law

870 Market Street, Suite 1128 • San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 362-2778 • FAX (415) 362-8048

August 6, 2001



Joan Kegler
Planning Department
1660 Mission Street 5th fl
San Francisco CA 94103

RE: 2000.790E - 888 Howard Street DEIR

Dear Joan:

This is submitted on behalf of Friends of Yerba Buena Gardens. I have not yet read much of the DEIR, but already know the public needs better information on the shadow impacts of this project.

The Department has taken an unfortunately narrow view of what should be included in this shadow analysis. This hotel is designed to function as an extension of the Yerba Buena/Moscone Center area. Yerba Buena Center has tens of millions of dollars of public investment, not to mention thousands of hours of community and public effort to develop a project that provides a benefit to the residents of the area and of the City. There is a HUGE public investment in the open space in Yerba Buena Garden.

Instead of fully explaining exactly how, what times and where this project will shadow the Gardens, the EIR cavalierly says it is not covered by Prop K and gives the usual mundane 10 am, noon and 3 pm shadow information. From the text it appears that in December the project will cast some new shadows on YBC. It is unclear whether there will be shadows on Hallidie Plaza.

PLEASE EXPLAIN THIS PROJECT'S SPECIFIC SHADOW IMPACTS ON YERBA BUENA GARDENS -- WHAT, WHEN, OF HOW GREAT DURATION.

The Redevelopment Agency and public put in substantial effort pushing the top of the Metreon complex away from the Gardens to preserve as much afternoon sunlight as possible. That effort should not be compromised by an unforeseen increase in height to the west of YBC. Please provide detailed information on the shadow impacts on Yerba Buena.

Sincerely,

Sue C. Hestor

cc: Helen Sause, Redevelopment Agency
Marcia Rosen, Redevelopment Agency
Friends of Yerba Buena Gardens



Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse



Gray Davis
GOVERNOR

Steve Nissen
DIRECTOR

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT
RECEIVED

DATE: August 7, 2001

AUG 09 2001

TO: Joan A. Kugler
San Francisco Planning Department
1660 Mission Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94103

PLANNING DEPT

RE: 888 Howard Street Hotel and Residential Development (2000.790E)
SCH#: 2001082014

This is to acknowledge that the State Clearinghouse has received your environmental document for state review. The review period assigned by the State Clearinghouse is:

Review Start Date: August 3, 2001
Review End Date: September 17, 2001

We have distributed your document to the following agencies and departments:

Caltrans, District 4
Department of Conservation
Department of Fish and Game, Region 3
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Integrated Waste Management Board
Native American Heritage Commission
Office of Historic Preservation
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 2
Resources Agency
State Lands Commission

The State Clearinghouse will provide a closing letter with any state agency comments to your attention on the date following the close of the review period.

Thank you for your participation in the State Clearinghouse review process.



2. Transcript from Public Hearing

1
2
3 BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION
4 CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
5
6

7 In re the matter of:)
8)
9 888 Howard)
10)
11)
12 Item 2000.0790E)
13)
14)
15)
16)

17 HEARING IN RE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

18 Thursday, September 6, 2001

19 ORIGINAL

20 City Hall
21 Room 400
22 San Francisco, California 94102

23 Reported by:

24 GEORGE SCHUMER, CSR NO. 3326

25 F110572



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A P P E A R A N C E S

BEFORE: PRESIDENT ANITA THEOHARIS

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Cynthia Joe

Jim Salinas, Sr.

William W. Fay

Roslyn Baltimore

Myrna Lim

- - -

Thursday, September 6, 2001

5:25 P.M.

P R O C E E D I N G S

SECRETARY LINDA AVERY: Item No. 18, Case 2000.0790E, for 888 Howard Street, the hotel and residential project; this is a public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

MR. PAUL MALTZER: Commissioners, Paul Maltzer of the Planning Department staff. What you have before you now is a hearing to receive comments on the Draft EIR for the proposed project at 888 Howard Street, a 39-story hotel and residential project. Just a few brief introductory comments.

I want to make sure people understand that Staff is not here to answer any of the comments or questions that will be made today. The comments will be transcribed by a court reporter, and responded to in writing in a subsequent document, the Comments and Responses document.

The Comments and Responses document, together with the Draft EIR -- together will make up the final EIR, and we will come back before the Planning Commission with two of those documents for a subsequent hearing, at which we would ask the Commission to certify that the final EIR is complete.

This hearing is also not to consider whether

1 or not the project should be approved or disapproved.
 2 That hearing would come after the completion of the
 3 environmental process. The comments today should be
 4 directed at the information content of this book: the
 5 adequacy and the accuracy of the information, and the
 6 conclusions that we have reached. And I believe that is
 7 the type of comment that we are looking for at this
 8 time.

9 I would ask that the commenters speak slowly
 10 and clearly, so that we can get all of their comments
 11 down. Also, I would request that they provide their
 12 name and address, so that we can mail them copies of the
 13 Comments and Responses document when it is completed.

14 After we hear from the public, we will also
 15 take Planning Commission comment.

16 And lastly, I want to point out that today is
 17 the public hearing. There is a written comment period
 18 on this document as well, which extends through
 19 September 18, 2001. So if someone does not comment at
 20 this time, there would still be opportunity to provide
 21 written comment through September 18.

22 That concludes my comments, and now I would
 23 open it up to hear from the public.

24 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: Thank you. I'm going
 25 to give everybody three minutes on this.

1 Quinton Mecke? And then Jenny Batallones.
2 And then Patrice Johnson, and Richard -- is it Richard
3 Marquez? And Ron Groshardt.

4 MR. QUINTON MECKE: Good morning -- good
5 morning? It has been a long day.

6 Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is
7 Quinton Mecke, from the South of Market [Inaudible]
8 Coalition.

9 In looking at the Draft EIR where the
10 Continental project is found, it is kind of hard to
11 imagine that on Page 94 it is given that there is a
12 basis or the assumption that there are no significant
13 impacts as far as long-term growth, or the encouragement
14 of growth in the neighborhood; sort of a neg-dec on the
15 idea.

16 We're currently looking at two and a half
17 times increase in height, in both from what it is
18 currently zoned, from 160 feet to 400 feet, and in the
19 Draft EIR I think that does encourage this rezoning;
20 upzoning; a level of growth that isn't acknowledged in
21 the Draft EIR, and that needs to be looked into, and how
22 that actually affects local businesses that are
23 currently in that surrounding area, as well as the
24 low-income community on 6th Street, which is a block
25 away.

1 In addition, on Page 88 there is a graph
2 regarding the level of use in the intersection. If you
3 look to the projection of 2015, 7 out of 11
4 intersections will then be creating "F," as far as
5 traffic density and volume. The mitigation that is
6 suggested, at least in the Draft EIR, is \$50,000 to the
7 Department of Parking and Traffic.

8 To have 7 out of 11 intersections graded "F,"
9 there's \$50,000 for mitigation. I think that needs to
10 be addressed.

11 In addition, I would also take sort of issue
12 with the idea that this building is not out of character
13 with existing urban patterns. These surrounding
14 buildings are no more than 160 feet. A 400-foot hotel
15 with 70 condominiums on top I think does change the
16 pattern.

17 The zoning, as it stands right now, was
18 intentionally done, as sort of a transition from Yerba
19 Buena into the western part of South of Market. This is
20 definitely a drastic change of use, and I think it does
21 stand out and is out of character with the existing
22 urban pattern.

23 Finally, they also note in the Draft EIR --
24 which I do agree with, and it is not mitigated -- which
25 is part of the problem -- a shortfall of 213 parking

1 spaces. The current parking lot is 100 spaces.

2 How do you mitigate for the increased
3 traffic; increased pedestrian safety problems; what have
4 you? There is also a shortfall of 213 spaces.

5 Finally, I guess the last note of my concern
6 is without a sort of -- lack of overall comprehensive
7 planning, this once again is sort of being parcel by
8 parcel. This is a massive up-zoning in an area that was
9 very much considered transition land from Yerba Buena to
10 the western and low-income parts of South of Market, so
11 without that sort of comprehensive plan or sort of "Stop
12 and let's actually take a look at how this actually
13 impacts the neighborhood as a whole," I think the Draft
14 EIR is sort of missing some of the impacts to the
15 business and general community.

16 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: Thank you.

17 Jenny -- if you would correct me?

18 MS. JENNY BATALLONES: My name is Jenny
19 Battallones, and I'm with the South of Market Community
20 Action Network. I'm here to voice my concern over the
21 Draft EIR report of this Continental project.

22 The Draft EIR does not address the possible
23 effects that hotel and luxury condominium project on 5th
24 and Howard will have on the surrounding neighborhood.
25 As a community advocate, I'm concerned about the

1 possible impact it will have on the low-income people of
2 color and the low-income community presently South of
3 Market.

4 These communities offer cultural diversity
5 within a neighborhood that has been displaced and
6 gentrified with dot-com and live-work loft development.
7 These communities need to be preserved and maintained.

8 So before approving this EIR, we urge you to
9 review and address our issues, the community issues.
10 Thanks.

11 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: Thank you. Patrice
12 Johnson. And then Richard Marquez. And then Ron
13 Groshardt.

14 MS. PATRICE JOHNSON: Good afternoon. My
15 name is Patrice Johnson; I am the family support
16 coordinator at South of Market Child Care.

17 It is clear that a project of this magnitude
18 will have an effect that people in South of Market will
19 feel has a significant impact on the community.

20 A more thorough investigation of this
21 proposal needs to be made, of the effects on surrounding
22 areas, small businesses, neighbors, and future
23 development nearby.

24 This project should be considered in
25 comparison to alternative projects that could prove to

1 have lesser impact. Without the full picture, it is
2 impossible to determine at this time whether or not
3 Continental's project can be a healthy addition to the
4 current neighborhood. Much more information is needed.

5 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: Thank you.

6 Mr. Marquez?

7 MR. MARQUEZ: Good evening, Commissioners.

8 Richard Marquez, 6th Street Agenda; no relation to
9 Victor Marquez, the attorney of record for Continental.

10 We're with the 6th Street Agenda; we're a
11 low-income SRO organizing advocacy project, and I know
12 the position here today is not to take a position.
13 However, the old saying is you can't remain neutral on a
14 moving train. And either we begin to derail this
15 project now, as a growing diverse coalition emerges, or
16 we will be compelled to ride the rails of resistance
17 until the wheels fall off.

18 Contextually, you know, everything seems to
19 be blamed on 6th Street residents right now: the mess
20 on Market. I'm even wondering if they are going to
21 blame who shot Kennedy on 6th Street residents, but I
22 think people know better.

23 In relation to the EIR, I think it is
24 shameless; it is shoddy; it is irresponsible; it is
25 insensitive; it is a charade of a document. The impacts

1 on the community aren't even examined here.

2 Historically it is an area that suffers severe
3 displacement, very much like the Fillmore.

4 These growth impacts aren't even being
5 considered, as the boom in building plans that Jenny
6 talked about has hit hard in the area. There is no need
7 to worry about the shark-mauling incidents at beaches
8 and resorts nationwide, because there is a shark feeding
9 frenzy going on in this area right now. So of course
10 those of us who organize and work with the low-income
11 community are opposed to this EIR, and Continental
12 officials mistakenly are believing that poor people
13 can't pay attention.

14 Well, they are paying attention, and they
15 know what time it is.

16 So I think we have to push for a
17 community-based comprehensive planning, and not
18 parcel-by-parcel corporate giveaways.

19 Thank you.

20 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: Thank you.

21 Mr. Groshardt? And just before you start,
22 Mr. Groshardt, if there is anyone else who wishes to
23 comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report, please
24 come to the front of the room.

25 Go ahead, please.

1 MR. RON GROSHARDT: My name is Ron Groshardt;
2 I also work with the 6th Street Agenda.

3 Just what San Francisco needs; this thing is
4 sticking out like a sore thumb: more cars; the parking
5 doesn't even address the needs of the building itself,
6 let alone that it is taking away a parking lot that's
7 there.

8 We're talking 300 or 400 more cars circling
9 around 5th Street; 5th and Howard. Just circling. I
10 don't think that's addressed in the environmental
11 report.

12 It is one block away from 6th Street; it's
13 just totally out of character with the neighborhood that
14 it is in. The height -- it's two and a half times -- if
15 there was an area you were in where you are zoning for a
16 particular parcel instead of community planning, this
17 has got to be it. I mean, 400 feet?

18 Coming out of Yerba Buena, the skyline
19 there -- it goes down, towards 6th Street. And now
20 we've got this thing going up in the air 400 feet.
21 Environmental impact has to address these issues, and I
22 don't think it does in this case. Thank you.

23 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: Thank you.

24 Does any other member of the public wish to
25 address the Commission on this item? I don't have any

1 more speaker cards.

2 Okay, I'm going to close the public comment,
3 and before we go to the Commissioners' comments, once
4 again, we invite the public to submit any written
5 comments to the Environmental Review Officer of the
6 Department of City Planning, 1616 Mission Street, until
7 the close of business on September 18.

8 Commissioner Lim?

9 COMMISSIONER LIM: I have about three
10 different comments.

11 I'm looking specifically at Page A-23 of the
12 Draft Environmental Impact Report, under the paragraph
13 "The San Francisco General Plan Community Safety
14 Element" -- the third paragraph, where it states that
15 "The project site is also located in an area of
16 liquefaction potential, in a Seismic Hazards Study Zone
17 designated by the California Division of Mines and
18 Geology" -- and so on and so forth. But then you have a
19 paragraph.

20 And then the next paragraph starts,
21 "To ensure compliance with all San Francisco Building
22 Code provisions regarding structural safety, when DBI
23 reviews the geotechnical report and building plans for
24 the proposed project, it will determine necessary
25 engineering and design features for the project, to

1 reduce potential damage to structures" -- one being that
2 I would like to -- for the Environmental Impact Report
3 to take a look at -- would be based on the area -- the
4 liquefaction potential of the area -- the fact that a
5 majority of the area has landfill; that perhaps a
6 geotechnical report be procured before we get that far;
7 that the geotechnical report try to establish what will
8 be potential hazards, either technically or because of
9 the landfill situation, for that particular parcel, or
10 for the fact that the ground water level in that area is
11 fairly shallow. So that's one.

12 Then the other point in this EIR -- Draft EIR
13 that I notice -- is with regards to the transferable
14 development rights. I didn't see with respect to the
15 building that it is being used for -- which transferable
16 development rights building are being used for, to
17 compensate for the development of this particular
18 project.

19 And thirdly, I know that this is not really
20 an environmental issue, but more a social issue with
21 regards to --

22 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: Excuse me, Ms. Lim.
23 This is very a technical thing, and you really need to
24 address your comments to the physical impacts of the
25 environmental report specifically.

1 This is a very legal document, and so if you
2 could keep your comments to what we're here for, and
3 that is to comment on the -- if this report is
4 sufficient, and if it is not sufficient, what added
5 information you need as to the physical impacts of the
6 report.

7 And the social issues: When the project --
8 if the project comes before us -- then that would be the
9 time to address those kinds of issues.

10 COMMISSIONER LIM: Thank you, Madam Chair. I
11 respect your position.

12 I believe the first two items that I spoke
13 of, were spoken of specifically in the paragraph that is
14 contained in the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

15 The third and final item I'm going to raise
16 would also be an environmental issue, in that I would
17 like -- and I have talked to the representatives of the
18 project sponsor about the situation; about the
19 displacement of the community in that particular area --
20 particularly the Filipino community of that area -- that
21 that be addressed right off the bat in conceptualizing
22 the project.

23 And I believe -- and I would like to commend
24 -- to add to the whole thing that they are in fact very
25 willing to work with that community, to bring in

1 residents.

2 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: Commissioner Baltimore?

3 COMMISSIONER BALTIMORE: I would just like
4 more information on the shortfall of 213 parking spaces.
5 That's it.

6 PRESIDENT THEOHARIS: You know, I just want
7 to clarify for the record on that Page A-23, that the
8 Environmental Impact Report doesn't address geology and
9 soils. I believe that's the Building Department.

10 You know, it is pursuant to the Building Code
11 for them to implement; I just wanted to say that. I
12 don't have any other comments.

13 Any other comments, Commissioners?

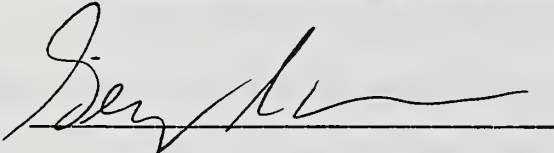
14 Okay, I'm going to close the public hearing
15 on this. Thank you.

16 Next item? And thank you to all of you who
17 waited until this late hour to testify; I appreciate it.

18 (Item concluded, 5:43 p.m.)
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25

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, GEORGE SCHUMER, a Certified Shorthand Reporter, hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were taken in shorthand by me at the time and place therein stated, and that the said proceedings were thereafter reduced to typewriting, by computer, under my direction and supervision.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'George Schumer', is written over a horizontal line.

George Schumer, CSR 3326

September 10, 2001

Date

• VIII. EIR AUTHORS

EIR AUTHORS

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Department of Public Works, Moscone Center Expansion

Joyce H. Oishi

San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau

Dale Hess, Executive Vice President

Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local 12

Faith Raider, Research Analyst

• IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Initial Study

Appendix B: Wind Tunnel Study

Appendix C: Intersection Level of Service Designations

Appendix D: San Francisco Air Pollutant Summary

Appendix E: Distribution List

Appendix A

Initial Study

**NOTICE THAT AN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
IS DETERMINED TO BE REQUIRED**

Date of this Notice: January 20, 2001

Lead Agency: Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco
1660 Mission Street - 6th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103-2414

Agency Contact Person: Joan A. Kugler, AICP

Telephone: (415) 558-5983

Project Title: 2000.790E -- 888 Howard Street, Hotel and Residential Project

Project Sponsor: 888 Howard Street Associates, LLC

Project Contact Person: John Buss

Telephone: (415) 782-5203

Project Address: 888 Howard Street/155 Fifth Street

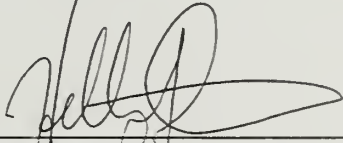
Assessor's Block(s) and Lot(s): Block 3724, Lot 66

City and County: San Francisco

Project Description: The project would be the construction of a 39-story, approximately 561,000-square-foot hotel and residential building with below-grade parking on the northeast corner of Fifth and Howard Streets (Assessor's Block 3724, Lot 66). The 37,860-square-foot existing site contains a surface parking lot with landscaping used by the adjacent Wells Fargo Data Center. The project would contain about 500 rooms, about 40,200 square feet of meeting space, an approximately 4,000-square-foot restaurant, and about 1,000 square feet of retail space. There would be a two-level below-grade parking garage that would accommodate approximately 62 independently accessible parking spaces or 100 valet parked spaces for the hotel and about 79 parking spaces for the residents. The hotel parking garage would have ingress and egress via a porte cochere on Howard Street. Above the hotel would be ten floor of approximately 60 to 70 residential condominiums. Residents would have a separate lobby on Fifth Street and secure parking on the second level of the below grand parking garage which would have access on Fifth Street. Guests would enter the hotel via the porte cochere on Howard Street. There would be two loading docks with access from Howard Street. The project site is within the C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District and the 160-F Height and Bulk District. The project would require a Conditional Use Authorization by the Planning Commission for hotel use, and a zoning reclassification from the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors for height, and floor area ratio.

THIS PROJECT MAY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT IS REQUIRED. This determination is based upon the criteria of the Guidelines of the State Secretary for Resources, Section 15063 (Initial Study), 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), and 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance), and the following reasons, as documented in the Environmental Evaluation (Initial Study) for the project, which is attached.

Deadline for Filing of an Appeal to the Planning Commission of this Determination that an EIR is required: February 19, 2001. An appeal requires: 1) a letter specifying the grounds for the appeal, and; 2) a \$209.00 filing fee. The public is invited to comment on the scope of the EIR. Such comments must be received by February 19, 2001 to ensure consideration in preparing the Draft EIR.



Hillary Gitelman
Environmental Review Officer

INITIAL STUDY
2000.790E: 888 Howard Street Mixed Use Project

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project would be the construction of a 39-story building, about 398 feet tall, with an approximate 561,000-square-foot hotel and residential building with two levels of below-grade parking on the northeast corner of Fifth and Howard Streets (Assessor's Block 3724, Lot 66) (Figure 1 Project Location, page 2).¹ The 37,860-square-foot site currently contains a surface parking lot with landscaping used by the employees of the adjacent Wells Fargo Data Center.

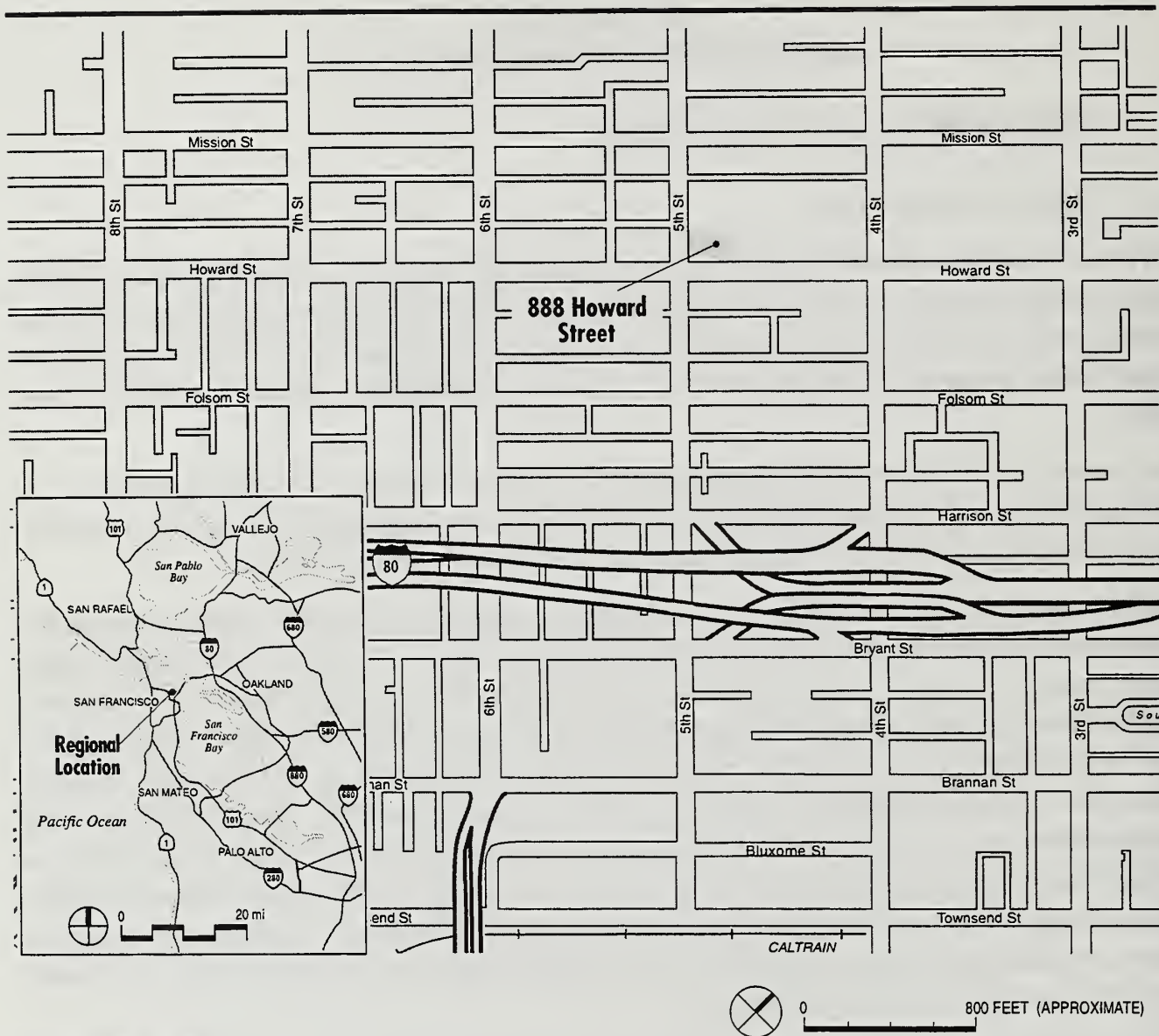
The project calls for the excavation of approximately 39,275 cubic yards of soil to a depth of about 28 feet. The proposed two-level parking garage would accommodate approximately 62 independently accessible parking spaces or 100 valet parked spaces for the hotel in addition to about 79 spaces for the residential use.

The hotel would be a full-service facility with approximately 500 rooms, and an approximately 4,000 square-foot restaurant on the ground floor, about 1,000 square feet of retail use, and about 40,200 sq.ft. of meeting and conference space (Figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, pages 3 to 10). The hotel would be specifically designed and operated to complement the Moscone Expansion III Project (Moscone West) currently under construction and due to open in 2003. The meeting spaces would include a main ballroom at over 7,200 sq.ft., two junior ballrooms, numerous meeting rooms of approximately 1,200 sq.ft. and a state-of-the-art equipped board room. Many of the meeting rooms would have direct access to a garden terrace on the third level. The fifth floor of the hotel would include a full-service health club and spa, including a 25-yard swimming pool. Guests would enter the hotel via a porte cochere on Howard Street on the east side of the building, which would also accommodate loading for two tourist buses. The restaurant would be on the southwest corner of the building fronting Fifth and Howard streets with the entrance on Howard Street. The retail space would be on Fifth Street.

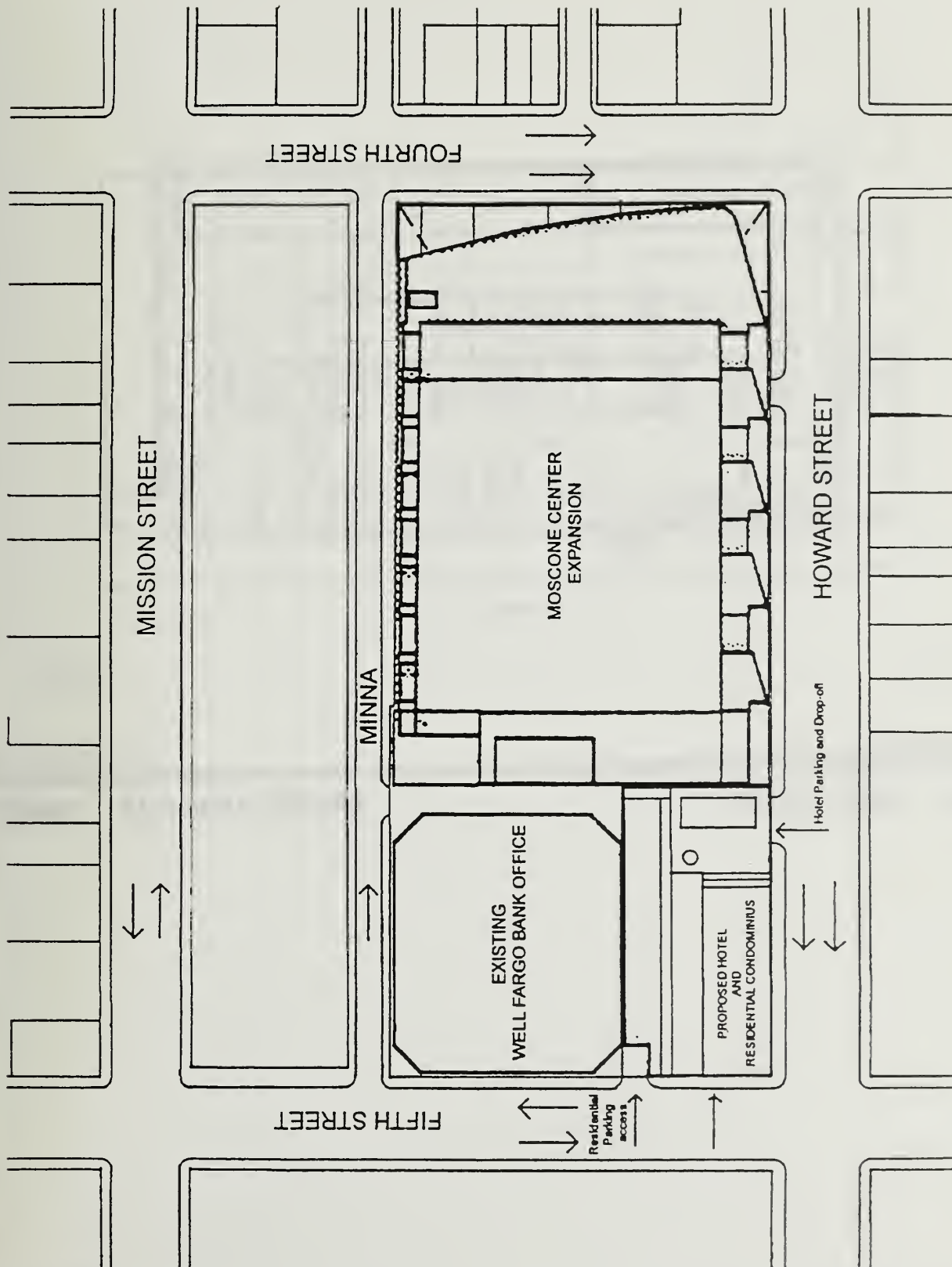
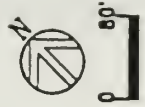
Above the hotel would be ten floors of approximately 60 to 70 residential condominiums. Residents would have a separate lobby with concierge service on Fifth Street, two private elevators, and secured parking on the second level of the below grade parking garage. The approximately 79-space parking garage would have ingress and egress on Fifth Street. Residents would be able to select various services from the hotel and one of the hotel's service elevators would provide access to all floors of the condominiums. Residents would also have access to the hotel health club on the fifth floor.

Two loading docks would be provided adjacent to the Wells Fargo Data Center on the north side and would be accessed via the porte cochere on Howard Street.

¹ Although Howard Street runs northeast to southwest, for descriptive purposes it is described as east-west.

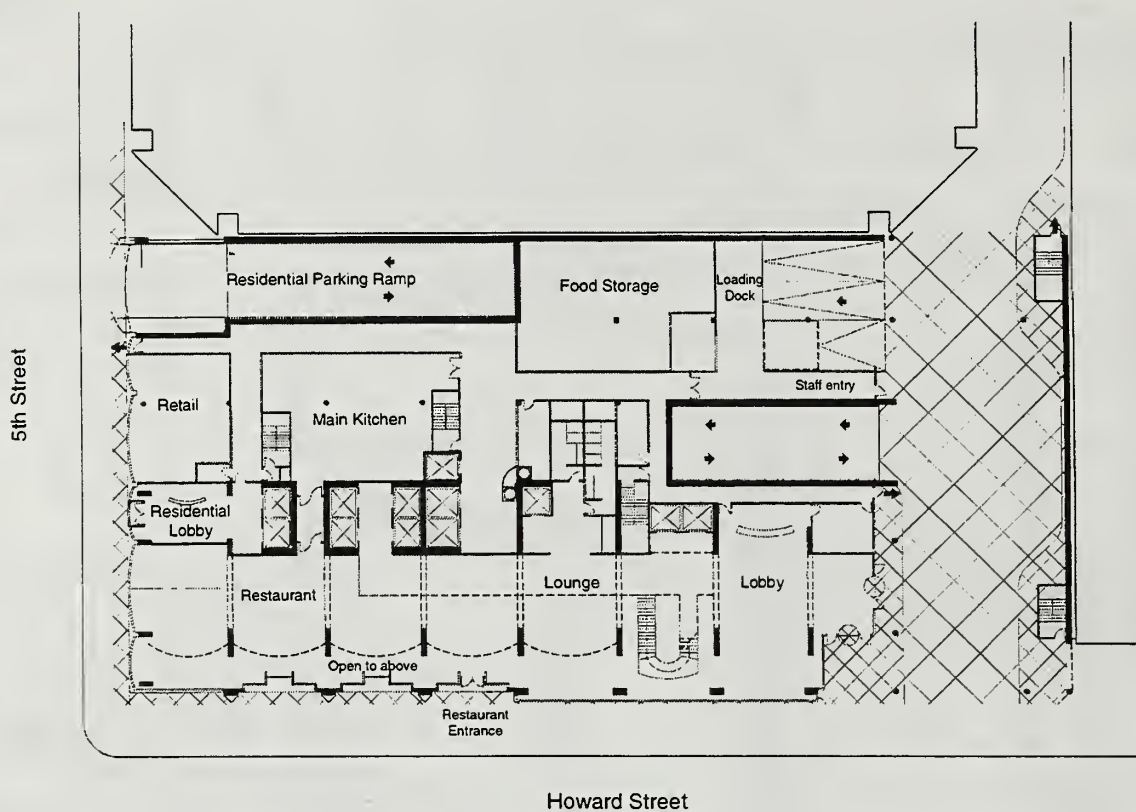


PROJECT LOCATION FIGURE 1



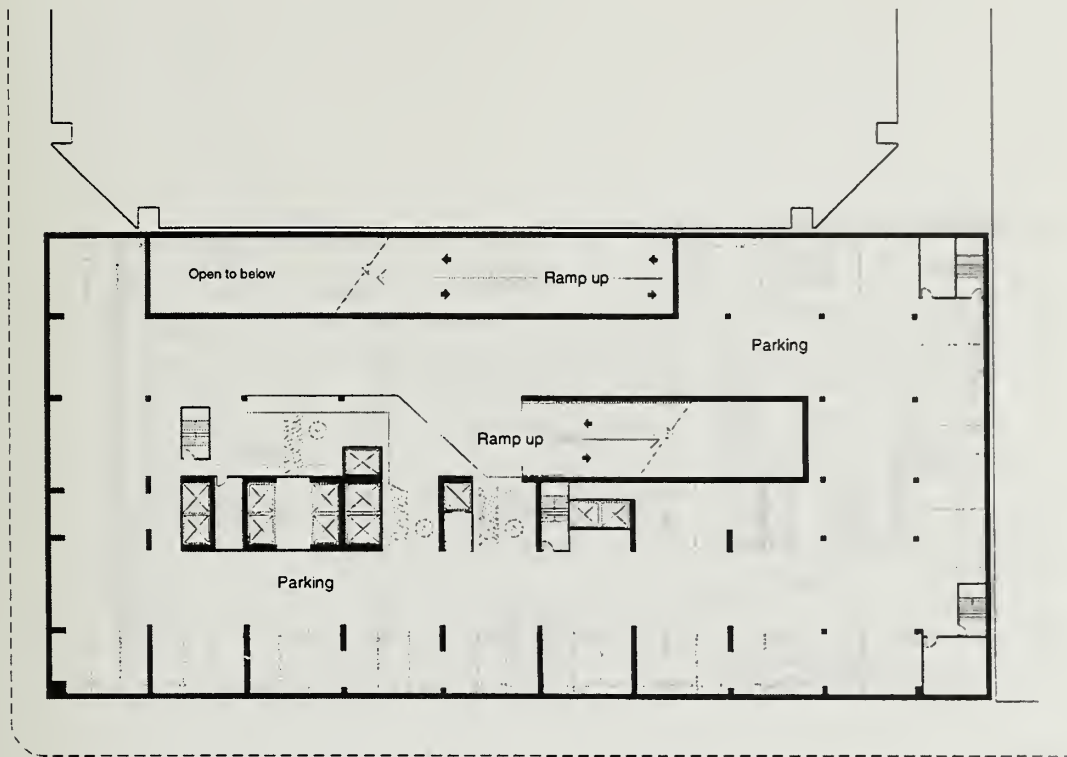
Source: Patri Merker Architects

SITE PLAN FIGURE 2



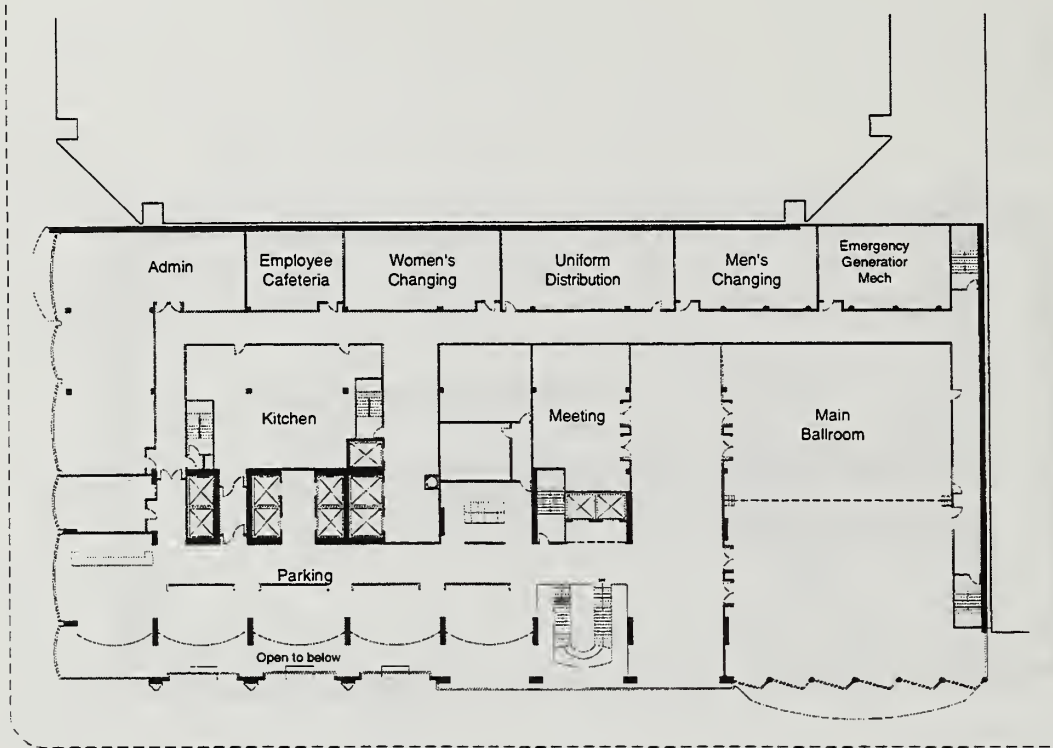
Source: Patri Merker Architects

GROUND FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 3



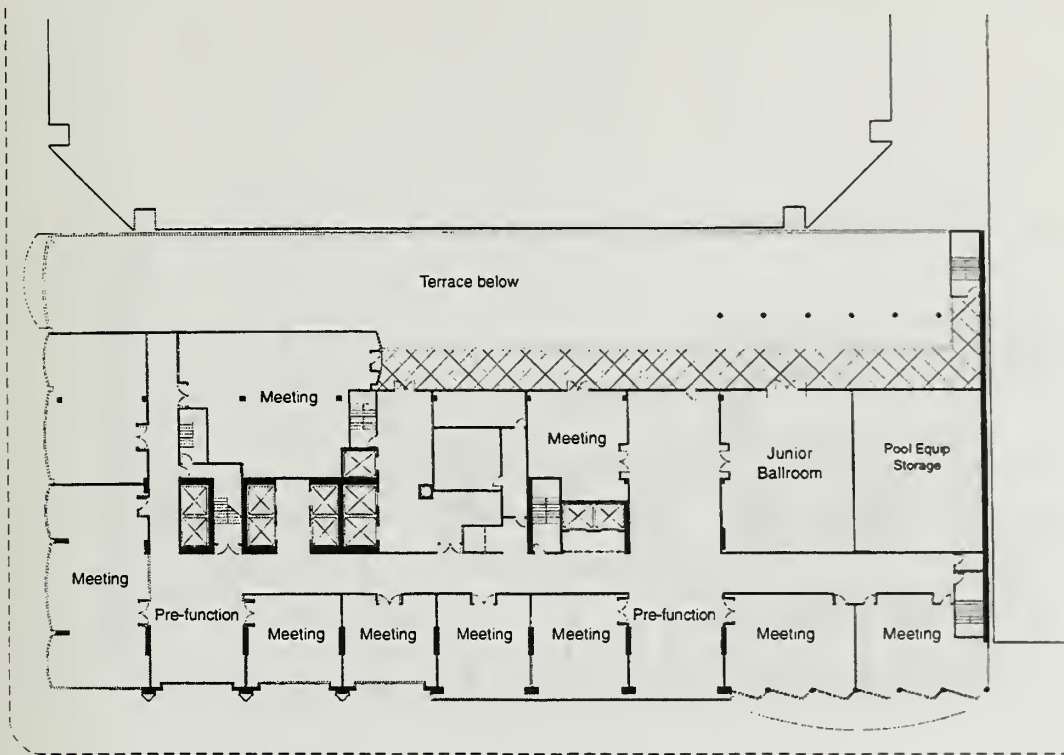
Source: Patri Merker Architects

LEVEL P-1 PLAN FIGURE 4



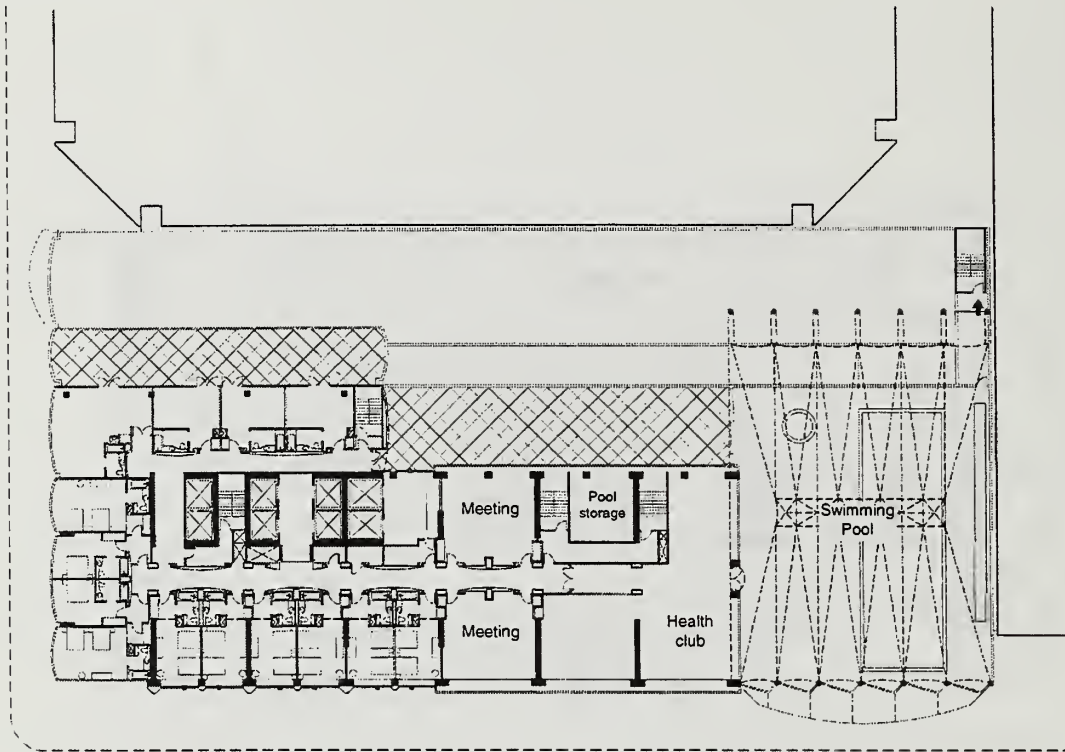
Source: Patri Merker Architects

SECOND FLOOR PLAN **FIGURE 5**



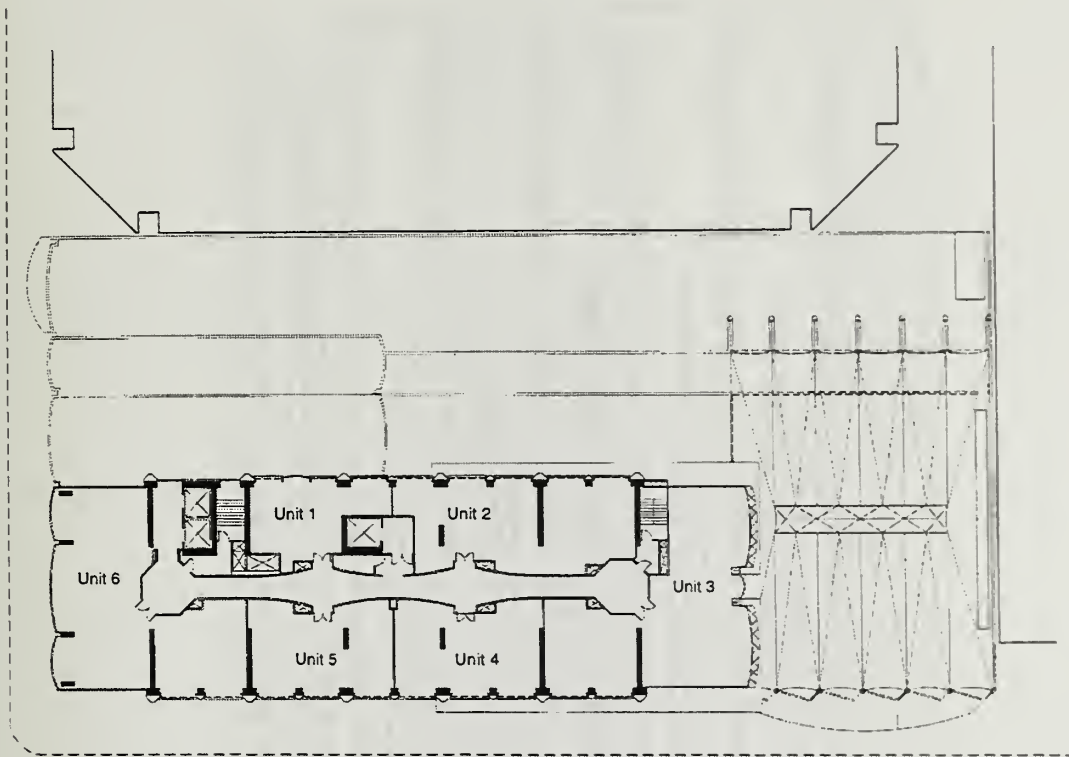
Source: Patri Merker Architects

FOURTH FLOOR PLAN **FIGURE 6**



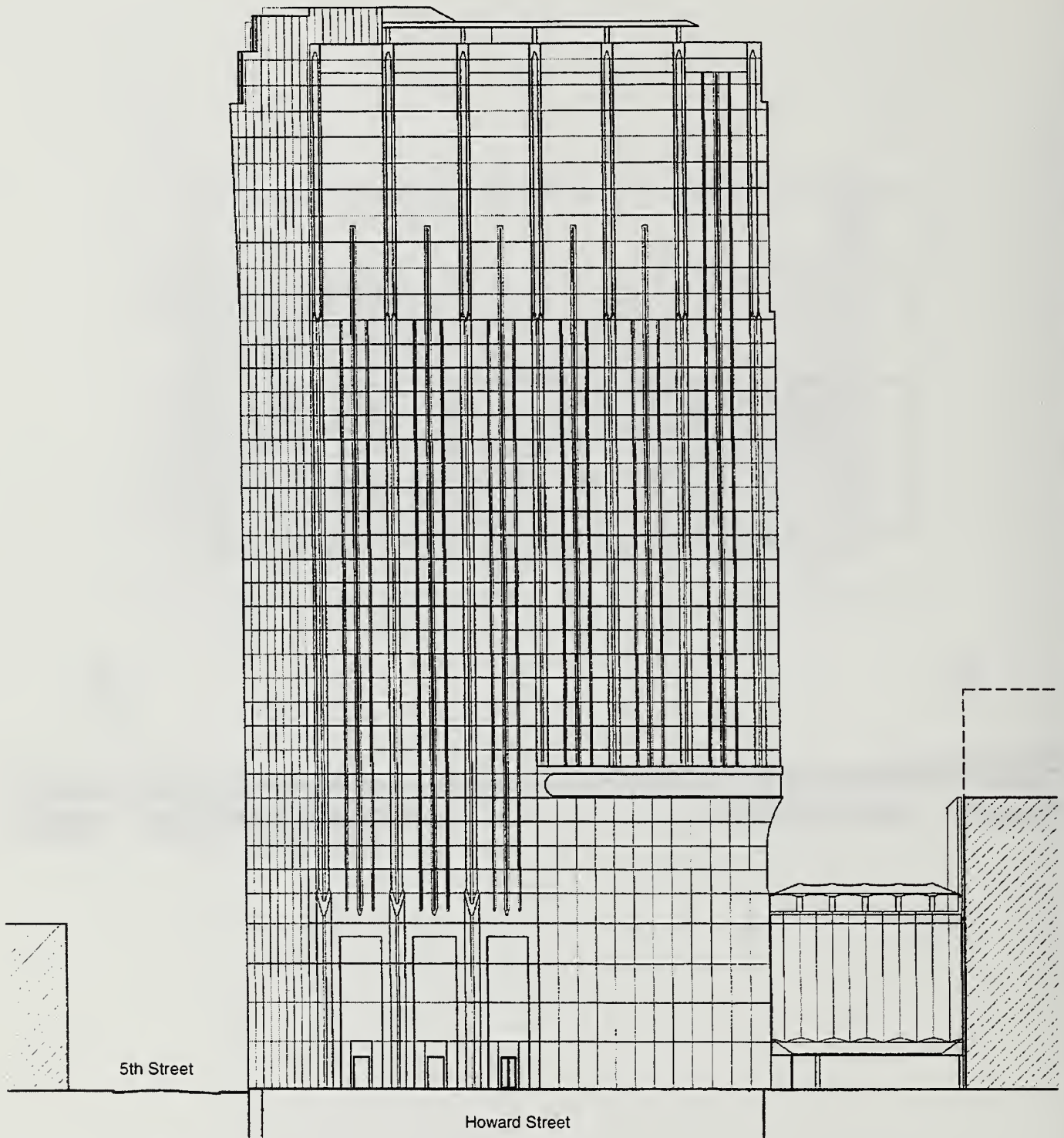
Source: Patri Merker Architects

FIFTH FLOOR PLAN **FIGURE 7**



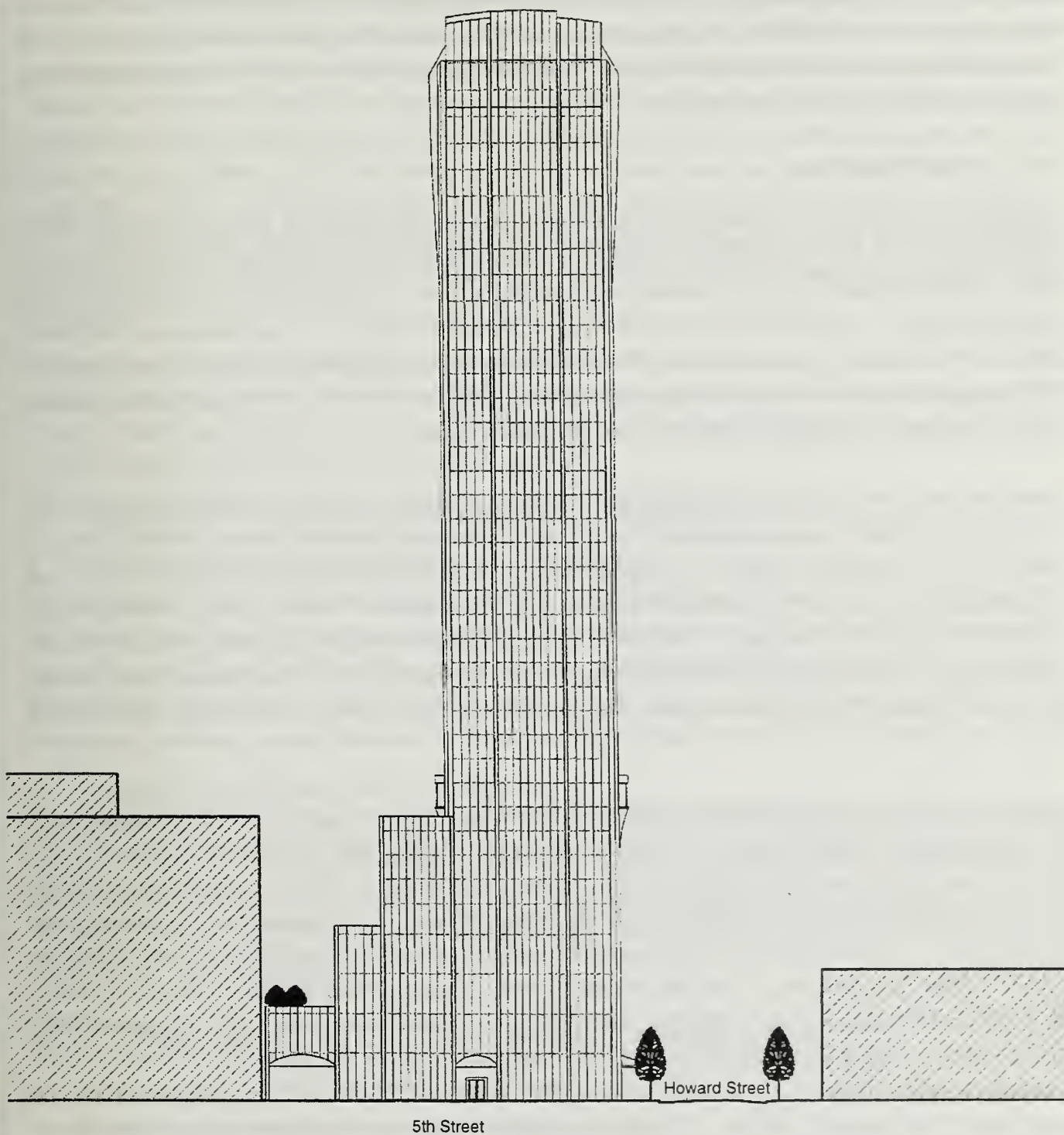
Source: Patri Merker Architects

RESIDENTIAL FLOOR PLAN **FIGURE 8**



Source: Patri Merker Architects

HOWARD STREET ELEVATION **FIGURE 9**



Source: Patri Merker Architects

FIFTH STREET ELEVATION **FIGURE 10**

The project site is in the South of Market neighborhood. It is zoned C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District and in a 160-F Height and Bulk District. The allowable floor area ratio (FAR) in this district is 5:1, or 7.5:1 with transfer development rights (TDRs). Project construction would take about 25 months and would open in 2004. The project construction cost is estimated at \$88 million. The project sponsor is 888 Howard Street Associates, LLC, and the project architect is Patri Merker Architects.

B. PROJECT SETTING

The project site is in the South of Market area, just outside the southwest edge of the Yerba Buena Center (YBC) Redevelopment Area. The South of Market area east of the site and the YBC Redevelopment Area are occupied by office, commercial, hotel, along with museum and performing arts uses, including many recently-constructed and high-rise buildings. Further north of the site is the Financial District with high-rise office buildings up to 400 feet in height, most of relatively recent construction. The portion of the South of Market area to the south and west of the site is occupied primarily by two- to five-story buildings dating from the early part of the twentieth century, housing a mix of residential, retail, office, commercial, and light industrial uses.

Immediately to the north of the proposed project site on the same side of Howard Street, the Moscone Expansion III Project (Moscone West) is under construction. Further north, in the block bounded by Mission, Howard, Third, and Fourth Streets, is the northern block of the Moscone Center, with the five-story Metreon building on the north side of Fourth Street, the mid-block Yerba Buena Gardens, and the Visual Arts and Performing Arts Centers on the west side of Third Street. On the east side of Third Street, is the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the 30-story W Hotel is on the northeast corner of Howard and Third Streets. The southern block of the Moscone Center occupies the block bounded by Folsom, Howard, Third, and Fourth Streets, with Carousel, Zeum building, and ice skating rink.

Immediately north to the proposed project on Fifth and Minna Streets is a seven-story office building occupied by Wells Fargo Bank off Minna Street. Further north on the east side of Fifth Street, the seven-level Fifth and Mission Garage occupies the area bounded by Minna, Mission, Fourth, and Fifth Streets. Further north, the eight-story Hotel Pickwick is on the northeast corner of Mission and Fifth Streets, with a two-story building used for parking adjacent to Hotel Pickwick. On the west side of Fifth Street, on the northwest corner of Fifth and Mission Streets, is the closed historic US Mint Museum building. The block bounded by Fifth, Mission, Minna, and Mary Streets is occupied by the San Francisco Newspaper Agency building, which extends over Minna Street to the south. The eastern portion of this block is occupied by private surface parking serving the Newspaper Agency building (formerly the San Francisco Chronicle Building). In the block bounded by Mission, Jessie, Fourth and Fifth is the planned retail and hotel project in the Emporium complex. Opposite the proposed project site, at the southwest corner of Natoma and Fifth Streets is a private parking area, with a two-story commercial building further south, and a five-story building with a ground-floor restaurant and residential units above on the northwest corner of Howard and Fifth Streets.

On the south side of Howard Street, between Fourth and Fifth Streets, there is a nine-story senior housing facility at the south corner of Fourth and Howard Streets. To the west of this building on the south side of Howard Street is a two-story commercial building, a landscaped parking area serving the 320 and 330 Clementina Towers to the south, a three-story commercial/office building, a vacant three-story commercial building, a three-story commercial/office

building, the two-story Pacific Gas and Electric Company Energy Center, and a two-story commercial building with a restaurant on the first floor. This commercial building is adjacent to the Burlington Coat Factory building, which faces the project site and extends to Fifth Street. The Burlington Coat Factory building houses a variety of retail outlets and other uses and is currently being renovated to include office/research, development and technology uses. The east portion of this building is six stories tall and the west portion, on the east corner of Fifth and Howard Streets, is three stories. The southwest corner of Fifth and Howard Streets is occupied by a surface parking lot, and on the northwest corner of Howard and Fifth Streets, opposite the proposed project site, is a five-story building with a ground-floor restaurant and residential units above. Between Fifth and Sixth Streets are a number of buildings two to five stories in height, most of which date from the early part of the twentieth century and contain printing, commercial office/research, development and technology, residential, live/work, hotel, restaurant/bar, auto repair uses and parking.

South of the proposed project site on Fifth Street, on the southeast corner of Tehama and Fifth Streets is a two-story commercial building, with an approximately 15-story apartment tower at the north corner of Clementina and Fifth Streets. Further west, Tehama Street is occupied by residential, live/work, and commercial buildings of one to eight stories in height, with the majority between two and four stories.

II. SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

A. EFFECTS FOUND TO BE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT

The 888 Howard Street Mixed-Use Project is examined in this Initial Study to identify potential effects on the environment. On the basis of this study, project-specific effects that relate to visual quality and glare, transportation, air quality, shadow, and wind have been determined to be potentially significant, and will be analyzed in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). In addition, the EIR will provide additional discussion of land use for informational purposes, although the impacts are determined in this Initial Study to be less than significant.

B. EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The following potential environmental effects were determined either to be less than significant or to be reduced to a less than significant level through mitigation measures included in the Initial Study and project. These items are discussed in Section III below, and require no further environmental analysis in the EIR: Land Use, Population, Noise, Utilities/Public Services, Biology, Geology/Topography, Water, Energy/Natural Resources, Hazards, and Cultural Resources.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

A. COMPATIBILITY WITH ZONING, PLANS AND POLICIES

- | | <u>N/A</u> | <u>Discussed</u> |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Discuss any variances, special authorizations, changes proposed to the City Planning Code or Zoning Map, if applicable. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Discuss any conflicts with any other adopted environmental plans and goals of the City or Region, if applicable. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |



The *San Francisco Planning Code*, which incorporates by reference the City's Zoning Maps, governs permitted uses, densities, and the configuration of buildings within San Francisco. Permits to construct new buildings (or to alter or

demolish existing ones) may not be issued unless either the proposed project conforms to the *Code*, or an exception is granted pursuant to provisions of the *Code*. The project would require Conditional Use authorization from the City Planning Commission, including a public hearing, for the hotel use, pursuant to Sections 216 and 303 of the *City Planning Code*.

The project site is located in a C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) District in San Francisco and a 160-F Height and Bulk District. The C-3-S District accommodates near the intensive downtown core areas important supporting functions such as wholesaling, printing, building services, secondary office space and parking. It also contains unique housing resources. In its eastern portion, the district also serves in part as an expansion area for offices, at a lesser intensity than in the Downtown Office District. At the time the district was created, it was identified as having been for the most part been underdeveloped in the past, with opportunities for major developments of new uses covering substantial areas.

Pursuant to Section 302 of the *City Planning Code*, the proposed project would require amendments to the Height, Bulk, FAR, and zoning designations of the site. The proposed change in the Height and Bulk District from 160-F to 400-M. The 400-M Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 400 feet plus mechanical penthouses, and, for portions of buildings over 100 feet, a maximum dimension of 250 feet and a maximum diagonal dimension of 300 feet. (The existing 160-F Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 160 feet, and, for portions of buildings over 80 feet, a maximum dimension of 110 feet and a maximum diagonal dimension of 140 feet.) The proposed zoning change is from the existing C-3-S (Downtown Commercial Support) zoning designation to C-3-S (SU), Downtown Commercial Support with Special Use Overlay for Hotel and Residential, to allow for a 7.5:1 FAR for hotel uses and no FAR requirement for Residential uses and related subsurface parking for each use. (In the C-3-S zone, the allowable FAR is 5:1, or 7.5:1 with TDRs.)

The project would also require amendments to the San Francisco *General Plan* corresponding to the changes in height, bulk, and density discussed above. The City's *General Plan*, which provides general policies and objectives to guide land use decisions, contains some policies which relate to physical environmental issues. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy, although, as mentioned above, the proposed project is not consistent with height, bulk, and density provisions of the *General Plan*, and would require amendments to the *Plan*. In general, potential conflicts with the *General Plan* are considered by decision makers independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision whether to approve or disapprove a proposed project. Conflicts either identified in this environmental document or not would be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project.

The proposed project would require approval from the Department of Public Works for a lot split to create an individual parcel for the project from the existing lot that also includes the adjacent existing office building.

Environmental plans and policies are those, like the Bay Area *Air Quality Plan*, which directly address physical environmental issues and/or contain targets or standards which must be met in order to preserve or improve characteristics of the City's physical environment. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy.

In November 1986, the voters of San Francisco approved *Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative*, which added Section 101.1 to the *San Francisco Planning Code* to establish eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service land uses from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; maximization of earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under CEQA; prior to issuing a permit for any demolition, conversion, or change of use; and prior to taking any action which requires a finding of consistency with the General Plan, the City is required to find that the proposed project or legislation is consistent with the Priority Policies. The case report and approval motions for the project will contain the analysis determining whether the proposed project is consistent with the Priority Policies.

The Planning Commission must certify the EIR as a complete and accurate environmental document for the project prior to taking any approval actions. As described above, the project would require Conditional Use authorization pursuant to Sections 216 and 303 of the *City Planning Code*, amendments to the Height, Bulk, FAR, and zoning designations of the site pursuant to Section 302 of the *City Planning Code* along with corresponding amendments to the San Francisco General Plan, and review as a project in a C-3 District under Section 309 of the *City Planning Code* by the City Planning Commission; approval from the Department of Public Works for a lot split; and a building permit from the Department of Building Inspection. Approvals necessary for the project and the relationship of the project to *Planning Code* requirements will be described in the EIR.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

All items except Visual Quality and Glare, Transportation/Circulation, Air Quality, Shadow and Wind on the Initial Study Environmental Evaluation Checklist have been checked "No," indicating that, upon evaluation, staff has determined that the proposed project could not have a significant adverse environmental effect. For items where the conclusion is "To be Determined," the analysis will be included in the EIR. Several of the Checklist items have been checked "Discussed," indicating that the Initial Study text includes discussion about that particular issue. For all of the items checked "No" without a discussion, the conclusions regarding potential significant adverse environmental effects are based on field observation, staff experience and expertise on similar projects, and/or standard reference material available within the Planning Department such as the Department's *Transportation Guidelines for Environmental Review*, or the California Natural Diversity Data Base and maps, published by the California Department of Fish and Game. For each Checklist item, staff considered both the individual and cumulative impacts of the proposed project.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
1. <u>Land Use</u> - Could the project:			
a. Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Have any substantial impact upon the existing character of the vicinity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The project site is located in the South of Market neighborhood. To the north and east of the site are office buildings, hotels, and museums and other cultural activities development, much of it of relatively recent construction, including the Moscone Center, Yerba Buena Gardens, and the Moscone Expansion III Project (Moscone West) currently under construction immediately northeast of the project site. To the south and west of the site is older, low-rise residential, commercial, and light industrial development, most of which dates from the first half of the twentieth century. The project site is, in part, currently occupied by a surface parking lot. The site consists of the southeast portion of a lot occupying the southwest side of the block bounded by Howard, Minna, Fourth, and Fifth Streets. The northwest portion of the lot that includes the proposed site is developed with a seven-story, 337,407-square-foot office building occupied by Wells Fargo Bank, plus a small utility building off Minna Street. This office building was constructed in the 1970s, and the parking lot on the project site has been in existence since at least 1970. Before that time, the project lot has been occupied by a variety of residential, commercial, and greenhouse agriculture uses.

The project would convert an existing surface parking use to a 39-story, high-rise, mixed-use development consisting of a hotel, residential condominiums, and a small amount (approximately 1,000 square feet) of retail space. The introduction of retail and transient and long-term residential uses to the project site will continue a wider trend of more intensive development in the South of Market and Yerba Buena Redevelopment Project areas.

The development of up to 561,000 square feet of hotel, residential, and retail uses in the area would not be a significant effect of the proposed project because it would be in an area that is intensively developed and that already supports substantial amounts of hotel, residential, cultural, and commercial development in surrounding blocks.

A market study commissioned by the project sponsor found that forecasted demand for hotel rooms in the area is strong, and would exceed the combined capacity of existing hotels, other proposed hotels, and the proposed project.² In addition, the area already includes residential uses, both in high-rise buildings to the east, and in low-rise and mid-rise buildings to the south. The project, however, would represent the largest concentration of hotel/residential space in the immediate area. As discussed in Project Setting, above, existing development to southwest of the proposed project site is largely low-rise, ranging from one to five stories in height. The proposed hotel/residential use would be similar in character to, although taller than, other commercial, residential, cultural, and hotel buildings located in the local area, and would be generally compatible with the prevailing urbanized character of the area. Because the project would be developed within the existing block and street configuration, it could not divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

In conclusion, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse land use impacts. However, the EIR will discuss land use for context and informational purposes.

Yes No Discussed

2. Visual Quality - Could the project:

- a. Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect?

To be Determined

² PKF Consulting, Report of the Potential Market Demand for a Proposed Hotel to be Located at 888 Howard Street, 26 May 2000.

- b. Substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas?
- c. Generate obtrusive light or glare substantially impacting other properties?

To be Determined
☐ ☒ ☒
Aesthetic effect

Aesthetics and urban design are subjective fields, and individuals may hold differing opinions about the aesthetic design of any proposed project. The current proposal is no exception, and although the project design is intended to complement immediately surrounding buildings in terms of design and materials, the building, at 39 stories above ground, would be substantially taller than neighboring buildings, and others may feel differently upon studying the proposal.

The design of the proposed project would comply with Planning Commission Resolution No. 9212, which prohibits the use of mirrored or reflective glass. The proposed project would not contain mirrored glass, but would be illuminated at night, and would be prominent because of its height.

Due to the size of the proposed project and the potential visibility of the proposed new construction, the EIR will include visual simulations and a more detailed discussion of aesthetic effects.

Views

The topography of the area surrounding the site is flat, and existing development limits views from streets and sidewalks. Views currently available to the public in the vicinity of the project site are available from Yerba Buena Gardens, one block northeast of the project site, but views from Yerba Buena Gardens to the southwest toward the project site are limited by the five-story Metreon building between the Gardens and the site. Private buildings in the area may have views of hills to the west, the downtown skyline to the northeast, or beyond. Views from public streets or private properties may be altered by the proposed construction, although this effect would be limited by the fact that the neighborhood is already densely developed. Due to the height and configuration of the proposed new construction, the EIR will include a more detailed discussion of effects on views.

- | | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> | <u>Discussed</u> |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3. <u>Population</u> - Could the project: | | | |
| a. Induce substantial growth or concentration of population? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Displace a large number of people (involving either housing or employment)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Create a substantial demand for additional housing in San Francisco, or substantially reduce the housing supply? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

The addition of 60 to 70 residential units, approximately 1,000 square feet of retail space, and 433,000 square feet of hotel space including 500 hotel rooms would increase the daily population on the project site by up to

approximately 1,275 people. This figure is based on a density of 1.37 persons per residential condominium³, one retail employee per 350 gross square feet of retail space⁴, an average of 1.69 guests per room and an 80 percent room occupancy rate⁵, and one hotel employee per room⁶. While potentially noticeable to the immediately adjacent neighbors, this population increase would be small relative to the existing population of the concentrated cultural, hotel, commercial and residential uses in the project area, and would not be a significant impact of the proposed project. The physical environmental effects of this increase in population on site will be addressed, primarily in the transportation and air quality sections of the EIR.

The project would create about 503 new jobs on the site. Many of the employees of the proposed project would already be living in the City. Others would come from outside San Francisco, and may seek housing within the City boundaries. Those who continue to live in outlying areas and commute into the City would contribute to potential transportation impacts, which will be addressed in the EIR. The project sponsor intends to attract as many employees as possible from the immediate neighborhood by training programs targeted at the local community, and support of local training programs including the South of Market Employment Center. As part of the Planning Commission's consideration of the project sponsor's request for conditional use authorization, the Commission would consider the issue of employment-generated housing demand. Specifically, Section 303(f) of the City Planning Code requires that *the Commission consider the impact of the employees of the hotel or motel on the demand in the City for housing, public transit, childcare, and other social services. To the extent relevant, the Commission shall also consider the seasonal and part-time nature of employment in the hotel or motel; and the measures that will be taken by the project sponsor to employ residents of San Francisco in order to minimize increased demand for regional transportation.*

Since there is no existing building on the project site, the project would not displace existing employees, residents or reduce the housing supply.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
4. <u>Transportation/Circulation</u> - Could the project:			
a. Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?			<u>To be Determined</u>
b. Interfere with existing transportation systems, causing substantial alterations to circulation patterns or major traffic hazards?			<u>To be Determined</u>

³ Residential density for Downtown Planning District from: Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco, San Francisco Atlas, October 1991.

⁴ City and County of San Francisco, Department of City Planning, *Guidelines for Environmental Review: Transportation Impacts*, Appendix 1, July 1991.

⁵ Dale Hess, Executive Vice President, San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau, personal communication, 26 October 2000.

⁶ Faith Raider, Research Analyst, Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local 12, personal communication, 27 October 2000.

- c. Cause a substantial increase in transit demand which cannot be accommodated by existing or proposed transit capacity? To be Determined
- d. Cause a substantial increase in parking demand which cannot be accommodated by existing parking facilities? To be Determined

The proposed project would include 141 parking spaces for hotel guests and residents, and two loading dock spaces. The increase in employees and guests on the project site would result in increased demands on the local transportation system, including increased traffic, transit demand, and parking demand. A Transportation Study will be conducted by a transportation consultant under the supervision of the Planning Department. The study will address the impacts of the proposed project on traffic and vehicular circulation, transit, pedestrian circulation, bicycling, parking, freight loading during project construction and occupancy, and cumulative traffic impacts.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
5. <u>Noise</u> - Could the project:			
a. Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Violate Title 24 Noise Insulation Standards, if applicable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Be substantially impacted by existing noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Project Operation

The noise generated by occupancy of the proposed hotel and residential units would not be considered a significant impact of the project. Noise generated by residential and hotel uses is common and generally accepted in urban areas, particularly in mixed hotel/residential/commercial/cultural areas such as the project vicinity. In addition, based on published scientific acoustic studies, the traffic volumes in the project area would need approximately to double to produce an increase in ambient noise levels noticeable to most people in the area. As the proposed project's uses would not cause doubling of the traffic volumes in the project area, the proposed project would not cause a noticeable nor significant increase in the ambient noise levels in the area.

The location of the proposed project within a mixed residential/hotel and nonresidential use area could result in the exposure of future residents to existing noise associated with the business activity in the area (e.g., early morning truck deliveries to businesses in the area). Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations establishes uniform noise insulation standards for projects where people will reside (including hotels and motels). The Department of Building Inspection would review the final building plans to insure that the building wall and floor/ceiling assemblies meet State standards regarding sound transmission.

Hence, operational noise requires no further analysis and will not be discussed in the EIR.

Project Construction

Construction of the proposed project would occur over a period of about 25 months. The project would have a mat foundation and piles would not be necessary. The proposed construction could generate noise and possibly vibration that may be considered an annoyance by occupants of nearby properties. The noise levels at receptors near the project

site would depend on their distance from the noise source and on the presence or absence of noise barriers. The noise would be most noticeable along the frontage of the construction area and decrease with distance. However, due to the temporary and intermittent nature of this impact, and the relatively higher urban noise levels existing in the immediate area, it would not be significant. Construction noise is regulated by the San Francisco Noise Ordinance (Article 29 of the San Francisco Police Code). The Noise Ordinance requires that project construction work be conducted in the following manner: 1.) noise levels of construction equipment, other than impact tools, must not exceed 80 decibels (measured as dBA; a unit of measure for sound - "A" denotes use of the A-weighted scale, which simulates the response to the human ear to various frequencies of sound) at a distance of 100 feet from the source; i.e., the equipment generating the noise; 2.) impact tools must have intake and exhaust mufflers that are approved by the Director of the Department of Public Works to best accomplish maximum noise reduction; and 3.) if the noise from the construction work would exceed the ambient noise levels at the property line of the site by five dBA, the work must not be conducted between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., unless the Director of the Department of Public Works authorizes a special permit for conducting the work during that period.

Because project construction noise would be temporary and intermittent and thus would not be considered significant, construction noise requires no further analysis and will not be addressed in the EIR.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
6. <u>Air Quality/Climate</u> - Could the project:			
a. Violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			<u>To be Determined</u>
b. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			<u>To be Determined</u>
c. Permeate its vicinity with objectionable odors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Alter wind, moisture or temperature (including sun shading effects) so as to substantially affect public areas, or change the climate either in the community or region?			<u>To be Determined</u>

Air Quality

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has identified size thresholds for various land uses, which, based on default assumptions, would result in mobile source emissions exceeding the District's threshold of significance for nitrogen oxides (NO_x).⁷ The District recommends more detailed analysis for any project whose size is near or exceeds the threshold. The proposed number of hotel rooms exceeds the District's threshold. Therefore, air quality impacts, including project construction and local and regional impacts of project operation, will be analyzed in the EIR.

⁷ Bay Area Air Quality Management District, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines, Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plans*, April 1996, Revised December 1999.

Shadow

The new 888 Howard Street Mixed-Use building would be 39 stories tall, which would increase the amount of shadow on area streets and sidewalks and adjacent properties at certain times of the day and year. Section 295 of the *San Francisco Planning Code* was adopted in response to Proposition K (passed in November 1984) in order to protect certain public open spaces from shadowing by new structures during the period between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset, year round. Section 295 restricts new shadow upon public spaces under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department by any structure exceeding 40 feet unless the Planning Commission finds the impact to be insignificant. To determine whether the proposed project would conform with Section 295, an application for a shadow fan analysis was submitted to the Planning Department. The results of the shadow analysis will be discussed in the EIR.

Wind

Wind conditions partly determine pedestrian comfort on sidewalks and in other public areas. In downtown areas, tall buildings can redirect wind flows around and down to street level, resulting in increased wind speed and turbulence at street level. The proposed building would be approximately 398 feet high (plus mechanical), with its long axis oriented northeast-southwest, parallel to Howard Street. The building's frontage on Fifth Street and its northwest side would be the building faces most exposed to the winds from the west. A Wind Study will be conducted by a meteorological consultant under the supervision of the Planning Department. The study will address the impacts of wind generated by the proposed project, and the results of the study will be discussed in the EIR.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
7. <u>Utilities/Public Services</u> - Could the project:			
a. Breach published national, state or local standards relating to solid waste or litter control?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Extend a sewer trunk line with capacity to serve new development?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase demand for schools, recreation or other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Require major expansion of power, water, or communications facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would incrementally increase demand for and use of public services and utilities on the project site, but not in excess of amounts expected and provided for in the project area. The project would be undertaken in a fully built-out area of downtown San Francisco, where all services and utilities are currently provided. No need for any expansion of public service or public utilities is anticipated. The new buildings would be designed to incorporate water-conserving measures such as low-flush toilets and urinals, as required by California State Building Code Section 402.0(c). In conclusion, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on public services and utilities. Therefore, the EIR will not discuss public services and utilities.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
8. <u>Biology</u> - Could the project:			
a. Substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal or plant, or the habitat of the species?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife or plants, or interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Require removal of substantial numbers of mature, scenic trees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Almost all of the project site is covered with impervious surfaces and it is located within an urban area which has been developed since the late nineteenth century. There are seven mature non-native street trees located on the perimeter of the site and some grass landscaping, but no significant wildlife habitat exists on the site. Development on the site would not affect any plant or animal habitats or interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory animal species. The publicly-accessible open space at street level and on the third-, fourth-, and fifth-floor terraces proposed as part of the project would include street trees and other vegetation appropriate for the urban landscape of the project site. In conclusion, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on biology. Therefore, the EIR will not discuss biology.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
9. <u>Geology/Topography</u> - Could the project:			
a. Expose people or structures to major geologic hazards (slides, subsidence, erosion and liquefaction)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Change substantially the topography or any unique geologic or physical features of the site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The project site is flat, with an approximate surface elevation of 12 to 15 feet. Based on borings taken in the course of the Phase I and Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment completed for the site, the project site is underlain by eight to 15 feet of fill, at varying depths across the site. The fill consists of loose to medium dense silty sand and silty sand with varying amounts of brick, tar, and glass fragments. Underlying the fill is a silty sand layer consisting of medium dense to very dense sand with variable amounts of silt approximately 20 to 35 feet thick. The depth to groundwater is believed to be approximately 22 to 27 feet below existing grade.⁸

Construction of foundations and two below-grade parking levels for the proposed project would require excavation to a maximum depth of 28 feet. Approximately 39,275 cubic yards of soil would be removed. Given the depth to groundwater, it is anticipated that temporary dewatering would be required during construction. If dewatering were necessary, the final soils report would address the potential settlement and subsidence impacts of this dewatering. Based on this discussion, the soils report would determine whether or not a lateral movement and settlement survey

⁸ Treadwell & Rollo, *Phase I and Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment*, 888 Howard Street, San Francisco, California, 2 August 2000. This report is available for public review in Project File No. 2000.790E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor, San Francisco.

should be done to monitor any movement or settlement of surrounding buildings and adjacent streets. If a monitoring survey were recommended, the Department of Building Inspection would require that a Special Inspector (as defined in Article 3 of the Building Code) be retained by the project sponsor to perform this monitoring. Groundwater observation wells would be installed to monitor potential settlement and subsidence. If, in the judgement of the Special Inspector, unacceptable movement were to occur during construction, groundwater recharge would be used to halt this settlement. The project sponsor would delay construction if necessary. Costs for the survey and any necessary repairs to service lines under the street would be borne by the project sponsor.

The *San Francisco General Plan Community Safety Element* contains maps that show areas in the City subject to geologic hazards. The project site is located in an area subject to groundshaking from earthquakes along the San Andreas and Northern Hayward faults and other faults in the San Francisco Bay Area (See Maps 2 and 3 in the Community Safety Element). The closest active faults are the San Andreas Fault, approximately eight miles southwest of the project site, and the Hayward Fault, about 16 miles northeast of the project site. As is the entire San Francisco Bay Area, the proposed project site is subject to groundshaking in the event of an earthquake on these faults, although surface rupture is not likely.

The project site is also located in an area of liquefaction potential, in a Seismic Hazards Study Zone (SHSZ) designated by the California Division of Mines and Geology.⁹ For any development proposal in an area of liquefaction potential, the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) will, in its review of the building permit application, require the project sponsor to prepare a geotechnical report pursuant to the State Seismic Hazards Mapping Act. The report would assess the nature and severity of the hazard(s) on the site and recommend project design and construction features that would reduce the hazards(s).

To ensure compliance with all *San Francisco Building Code* provisions regarding structural safety, when DBI reviews the geotechnical report and building plans for the proposed project, it will determine necessary engineering and design features for the project to reduce potential damage to structures from groundshaking and liquefaction. Therefore, potential damage to structures from geologic hazards on the project site would be mitigated through the DBI requirement for a geotechnical report and review of the building permit application pursuant to its implementation of the *Building Code*. The EIR will not address geology and soils.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
10. <u>Water</u> - Could the project:			
a. Substantially degrade water quality, or contaminate a public water supply?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially degrade or deplete ground water resources, or interfere substantially with ground water recharge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

⁹ City and County of San Francisco, *Community Safety Element, San Francisco General Plan*, April 1997.

Based on a recent report prepared by Treadwell and Rollo, groundwater at the site is believed to be 22 to 27 feet below the ground surface.¹⁰ Groundwater at the site is currently being affected by dewatering for the construction project for the Moscone Expansion III Project that is located adjacent to the proposed project site. Regional groundwater flow in the area is assumed to be to the east, towards San Francisco Bay.

Any groundwater encountered during construction of the proposed project would be subject to requirements of the City's Industrial Waste Ordinance (Ordinance Number 199-77), requiring that groundwater meet specified water quality standards before it may be discharged into the sewer system. The Bureau of System Planning, Environment, and Compliance (SPEAC) of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission must be notified of projects necessitating dewatering, and may require groundwater analysis before discharge. Potential degradation of groundwater quality as a result of dewatering during project construction would be reduced to a less than significant level through SPEAC requirement for retention of groundwater pumped from the project site in a holding tank, and analysis of the quality of this groundwater before it is discharged to the combined sanitary and storm drain sewer system.

Almost all of the project site is currently covered by impervious surfaces. Site drainage would be redesigned to take into account the below-grade structure, but site runoff would continue to drain to the City's combined storm and sanitary sewer and be treated at the Southwest Water Pollution Control Plant prior to discharge to San Francisco Bay. Wastewater treatment would be provided pursuant to the effluent discharge limitations set by the Plant's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. The foundation and portions of the building below grade would be water tight to avoid the need to permanently pump and discharge water. Natural groundwater flow would continue under and around the site. The project, therefore, would not substantially alter existing groundwater quality or flow conditions.

In conclusion, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on surface water or groundwater quality. Therefore, the EIR will not discuss water.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
11. <u>Energy/Natural Resources</u> - Could the project:			
a. Encourage activities which result in the use of large amounts of fuel, water, or energy, or use these in a wasteful manner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Have a substantial effect on the potential use, extraction, or depletion of a natural resource?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹⁰ Treadwell & Rollo, *Phase I and Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment*, 888 Howard Street, San Francisco, California, 2 August 2000. This report is available for public review in Project File No. 2000.790E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor, San Francisco.

The Department of Building Inspection requires that the design of new buildings in San Francisco is required to conform to energy conservation standards specified by Title 24 of the *California Code of Regulations*. Documentation showing compliance with these standards is submitted with the application for the building permit. Title 24 is enforced by the Department of Building Inspection. Therefore, no further analysis of energy is required, and the EIR will not discuss energy.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
12. Hazards - Could the project:			
a. Create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials which pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the area affected?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Interfere with emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Create a potentially substantial fire hazard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

This section addresses the potential hazardous materials on the project site, including Underground Storage Tanks (USTs), contaminants in the soils, and fire hazards.

Phase I and Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) were conducted for the project by Treadwell & Rollo in August 2000¹¹. The ESAs described the land use history of the project site and area that may have involved handling, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials that could have affected the quality of soils or groundwater, and analyzed soil samples taken on the site for the presence of chemically-affected soil on the project property.

Underground Storage Tanks

The site was occupied by a variety of commercial uses from 1887 to 1970, when it was converted to a parking lot. Based on the age of the previous buildings that have occupied the site, it is unknown if underground storage tanks are located on the site. Though no records exist indicating that underground storage tanks are located on the site, many underground storage tanks were not registered with the City and County of San Francisco and/or the San Francisco Fire Department. Implementation of Mitigation Measure Number 2 by the project sponsor in the Mitigation Measures section of the Initial Study would reduce potential impacts related to the possible presence of underground storage tanks to a less-than-significant level.

Soil Contamination

¹¹ Treadwell & Rollo, *Phase I and Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment*, 888 Howard Street, San Francisco, California, 2 August 2000. This report is available for public review in Project File No. 2000.790E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor, San Francisco

The site is underlain by approximately eight to 15 feet of fill material composed of loose to medium dense silty sand and silty sand with varying amounts of brick, tar, and glass fragments. A silty sand layer consisting of medium dense to very dense sand with variable amounts of silt approximately 20 to 35 feet thick underlies the fill material. A limited subsurface soil investigation was conducted as part of the Phase I and Phase II ESAs to assess the presence of regulated chemical compounds in the fill soil beneath the site. Four soil borings were drilled to a depth of 15 feet or more near the four corners of the site in June 2000. A total of 12 samples, collected at various depths from each of the four borings, was submitted for laboratory analysis. All samples were analyzed for total recoverable petroleum hydrocarbons (TRPH); total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline, diesel, and motor oil (TPH(g), TPH(d), and TPH(mo), respectively); benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes (BTEX); methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE); and total lead. Some samples were analyzed for volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), cadmium, chromium, nickel, and zinc. Selected samples with elevated concentrations of total lead (greater than 50 parts per million) were also analyzed for soluble lead.

No gasoline, BTEX, MTBE, or VOCs were detected at or above the analytical method reporting limits in the soil samples analyzed. Diesel was detected at a concentration of 1.3 milligrams per kilogram from one sample. Low levels of total petroleum hydrocarbons as motor oil were detected in three of the 12 samples analyzed, at concentrations ranging from 32 to 860 ppm. Low levels of total recoverable petroleum hydrocarbons (TRPH) were detected in three of the 12 samples analyzed, at concentrations ranging from 30 to 65 ppm. Low levels of chromium, nickel, and zinc were detected in two samples. Di-n-butylphthalate was the only SVOC detected, at a concentration of 2,200 micrograms per kilogram in one sample.

Total lead was detected in six of the 11 soil samples submitted for chemical analysis at concentrations ranging from 6.6 to 280 ppm. Two samples contained lead levels above 50 ppm, at concentrations of 150 ppm and 280 ppm. Based on these results, these two soil samples were submitted for further analytical testing for soluble lead using the Soluble Threshold Limit Concentration (STLC) by California Waste Extraction Test (WET) method and Federal Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Potential (TCLP) analyses. STLC lead was detected in the two selected samples analyzed, at concentrations of 2.6 and 0.27 ppm. TCLP lead was not detected at or above the method reporting limits in the two samples analyzed.

Construction of the new building at 888 Howard Street would entail excavation of about 39,275 cubic yards of soil. Because hazardous materials were detected in the soils on the site, a Site Mitigation Plan (SMP) and a Health and Safety (H&S) Plan would be required prior to construction. The project sponsor has agreed to implement Mitigation Measure Number 3 in the Mitigation Measures section of the Initial Study, which would ensure that any potential impacts due to the presence of petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, or other hazardous materials in soils on the project site would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Fire Hazards

San Francisco ensures fire safety primarily through provisions of the Building Code and the Fire Code. Existing buildings are required to meet standards contained in these codes. In addition, the final building plans for any new residential project greater than two units are reviewed by the San Francisco Fire Department (as well as the

Department of Building Inspection), in order to ensure conformance with these provisions. The proposed project would conform to these standards, including development of an emergency procedure manual and an exit drill plan. In this way, potential fire hazards (including those associated with hillside development, hydrant water pressure, and emergency access) would be mitigated during the permit review process.

Occupants of the proposed building would contribute to congestion if an emergency evacuation of the South of Market area were required. Section 12.202(e)(1) of the San Francisco Fire Code requires that all owners of high-rise buildings (over 75 feet) "shall establish or cause to be established procedures to be followed in case of fire or other emergencies. All such procedures shall be reviewed and approved by the chief of division." Additionally, project construction would have to conform to the provisions of the Building and Fire Codes which require additional life-safety protections for high-rise buildings.

In conclusion, potential public health and safety hazards related to the possible presence of underground storage tanks, soil contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons and heavy metals on the project site, and potential fire hazards in the new building would be reduced to a less than significant level as a result of regulations and procedures already established as part of the review process for building permits and mitigation proposed as part of the project. Therefore, the EIR will not discuss hazards.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
13. <u>Cultural</u> - Could the project:			
a. Disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance to a community, ethnic or social group; or a paleontological site except as a part of a scientific study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Conflict with the preservation of buildings subject to the provisions of Article 10 or (proposed) Article 11 of the City Planning Code?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Resources

A cultural resources evaluation of the project site was completed by an independent consultant and is summarized here.¹² Archival data indicate that between 1776 and the early- to mid-1850s, the project site remained in a natural

¹² Allen G. Pastron, PhD., *Archival Cultural Resources Evaluation of the 888 Howard Street Hotel and Residential Development Project, San Francisco, California*, November 2000. This report is available for public review in Project File No. 2000.790E: 888 at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA.

state, unoccupied and unexploited. Filling and grading of the bay marshes in the South of Market area began during the early 1850s.

Although no prehistoric resources are known to exist within the confines of the present project site, available documented evidence suggests a possibility of significant prehistoric/protohistoric archaeological remains within the confines of the subject property. Previous archaeological research in San Francisco suggests that the subject parcels and their immediate surroundings would have represented a generally favorable habitat for Native American hunters and gatherers. The presence of deeply buried cultural deposits as near as two blocks from the site dictates that caution be exercised before concluding that such resources do not exist. Archival resources indicate that the chance of recovering cultural resources from the Spanish, Mexican, or Early American periods is minimal. It is possible that later Gold Rush era and late Nineteenth Century cultural resources may lie buried below the ground surface of the site. The report concludes that, based on the body of archival documentation examined and assessed during the course of the present research, there is a potential for significant subsurface cultural resources to be adversely impacted by excavation and construction. Construction of the proposed project would require excavation of approximately 39,275 cubic yards of soil. Given the potential presence of archaeological resources on the site, a program of pre-construction archaeological testing and evaluation is recommended to determine the presence or absence of subsurface archaeological resources of significance, as identified in Mitigation Measure No. 4, pages 36 and 37.

Historic Architectural Resources

The proposed project could affect historic and architectural resources of significance on the project site or on adjacent properties. Buildings on and in the vicinity of the project site were surveyed between 1974 and 1976 as part of a City-sponsored citywide inventory of architecturally significant buildings. The inventory assessed the architectural significance of 10,000 surveyed structures from the standpoint of overall design and particular design features. Both contemporary and older buildings were included and each building was numerically rated according to its overall architectural significance. The ratings ranged from a low of "0" to a high of "5". Factors considered included architectural significance, urban design context, and overall environmental significance. No building on or adjacent to the proposed project site was listed in the 1976 Citywide Architectural Survey. Further, no building on the project site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or listed under Article 10 of the *City Planning Code* (which concerns sites such as designated City Landmarks and buildings within Historic Districts), or Article 11 of the *City Planning Code* (which involves rating buildings for their architectural significance). The proposed project would not have any significant impact on architectural or historical resources and this environmental area will not be discussed further in the EIR.

Yes No Discussed

C. OTHER

Require approval and/or permits from City Departments other than the Planning Department or Department of Building Inspection or from Regional, State or Federal Agencies?

■ □ ■

The proposed project would require approval from the Department of Public Works for a lot split.

D. MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
1. Could the project have significant effect if mitigation measures are not included in the project?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Are all mitigation measures necessary to eliminate significant effects included in the project?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The following mitigation measures are related to topics determined to require no further analysis in the EIR. The EIR will contain a Mitigation Measures chapter which describes these measures and includes other measures which would or could be adopted to reduce potential adverse effects of the project identified in the EIR.

The project sponsor has agreed to implement the following mitigation measures:

Mitigation Measure 1

Construction Air Quality: The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to spray the project site with water during excavation, grading, and site preparation activities; spray unpaved construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other such material; cover trucks hauling debris, soils, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during these periods at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

The project sponsor shall require the project contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as prohibiting idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementing specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

Mitigation Measure 2(a)

Hazards (Underground Storage Tanks): The project sponsor shall conduct an Underground Storage Tank (UST) scan by magnetometer to determine if abandoned USTs or piping exist on the site. If any are found, they shall be removed in accordance with regulatory requirements, and surrounding soils shall be tested. Any soil found to be contaminated at or above potentially hazardous levels shall be handled and disposed in accordance with Mitigation Measure No. 3, below.

Mitigation Measure 2(b)

Hazards (Contaminated Soil):

Step 1: Preparation of Site Mitigation Plan:

If, based on the results of the soil tests conducted, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the DPH shall determine if preparation of a Site Mitigation Plan (SMP) is warranted. If such a plan is requested by the DPH, the SMP shall include a discussion of the level of contamination of soils on the project site and mitigation measures for managing contaminated soils on the site, including, but not limited to: 1) the alternatives for managing contaminated soils on the site (e.g., encapsulation, partial or complete removal, treatment, recycling for reuse, or a combination); 2) the preferred alternative for managing contaminated soils on the site and a brief justification; and 3) the specific practices to be used to handle, haul, and dispose of contaminated soils on the site. The SMP shall be submitted to the DPH for review and approval. A copy of the SMP shall be submitted to the Planning Department to become part of the case file.

Step 2: Handling, Hauling, and Disposal of Contaminated Soils

- (a) specific work practices: If based on the results of the soil tests conducted, DPH determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the construction contractor shall be alert for the presence of such soils during excavation and other construction activities on the site (detected through soil odor, color, and texture and results of on-site soil testing), and shall be prepared to handle, profile (i.e., characterize), and dispose of such soils appropriately (i.e., as dictated by local, state, and federal regulations, including OSHA lead-safe work practices) when such soils are encountered on the site.
- (b) dust suppression: Soils exposed during excavation for site preparation and project construction activities shall be kept moist throughout the time they are exposed, both during and after work hours.
- (c) surface water runoff control: Where soils are stockpiled, visqueen shall be used to create an impermeable liner, both beneath and on top of the soils, with a berm to contain any potential surface water runoff from the soil stockpiles during inclement weather.
- (d) soils replacement: If necessary, clean fill or other suitable material(s) shall be used to bring portions of the project site, where contaminated soils have been excavated and removed, up to construction grade.
- (e) hauling and disposal: Contaminated soils shall be hauled off the project site by waste hauling trucks appropriately certified with the State of California and adequately covered to prevent dispersion of the soils during transit, and shall be disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste disposal facility registered with the State of California.

Step 3: Preparation of Closure/Certification Report

After excavation and foundation construction activities are completed, the project sponsor shall prepare and submit a closure/certification report to DPH for review and approval. The closure/certification report shall

include the mitigation measures in the SMP for handling and removing contaminated soils from the project site, whether the construction contractor modified any of these mitigation measures, and how and why the construction contractor modified those mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measure 3

Cultural Resources:

The project sponsor shall retain the services of an archaeologist. During removal of structures, paving, and any buried foundation materials found on the site, the archaeologist shall carry out a pre-excavation testing program to better determine the probability of finding archaeological remains on the site. The testing program shall consist of a series of mechanical, exploratory borings or trenches and/or other testing methods determined to be appropriate by the archaeologist.

If, after testing, the archaeologist determines that no further investigations or precautions are necessary to safeguard potentially significant archaeological resources, the archaeologist shall submit a written report to the Environmental Review Officer (ERO), with a copy to the project sponsor. If the archaeologist determines that further investigations or precautions are necessary, he/she shall consult with the ERO, and they shall jointly determine what additional procedures are necessary to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources.

These additional mitigation measures shall be implemented by the project sponsor and might include a program of on-site monitoring of site excavation that may be necessary, during which the archaeologist shall record observations in a permanent log. Whether or not there are archaeological finds of significance, the archaeologist shall prepare a written report on the monitoring program that shall be submitted first and directly to the ERO, with a copy to the project sponsor. During the monitoring program, the project sponsor shall designate one individual on site as his/her representative. This representative shall have the authority to suspend work at the site to give the archaeologist time to investigate and evaluate archaeological resources should they be encountered.

Should evidence of archaeological resources of potential significance be found during the monitoring program, the archaeologist shall immediately notify the Environmental Review Officer (ERO), and the project sponsor shall halt any activities which the archaeologist and the ERO jointly determine could damage such archaeological resources. Ground disturbing activities that might damage cultural resources would be suspended for a total maximum of four weeks over the course of construction.

After notifying the ERO, the archaeologist shall prepare a written report to be submitted first and directly to the ERO, with a copy to the project sponsor, which shall contain an assessment of the potential significance of the archaeological finds and recommendations for what measures should be implemented to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources. Based on this report, the ERO shall recommend specific mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor. These additional mitigation measures might include a site security program, additional on-site investigations by the archaeologist, and/or documentation, preservation, and recovery of the cultural material.

Finally, the archaeologist shall prepare a report documenting the cultural resources that were discovered, an evaluation as to their significance, and a description as to how any archaeological testing, exploration and/or recovery program was conducted.

Copies of all draft reports prepared according to this mitigation measure would be sent first and directly to the ERO for review. Following approval by the ERO, copies of the final report would be sent to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey, Northwest Information Center. The Office of Major Environmental Analysis shall receive three copies of the final archaeological report, accompanied by copies of transmittals documenting its distribution to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey, Northwest Information Center.

E. ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives to the proposed project will be defined further and described in the EIR. At a minimum, the alternatives analyzed in the EIR will include the following:

1. A No Project Alternative, in which the project site would remain in its existing parking condition.
2. A Code-Compliant Alternative, in which the proposed uses would be at a lower level of intensity that would comply with existing zoning, height, bulk, and FAR restrictions.
3. A Hotel-Only Alternative, in which the proposed project would consist solely of hotel uses, with no residential uses.

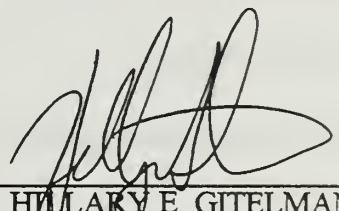
F. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
1. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the project have possible environmental effects which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Analyze in the light of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Would the project cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

G. ON THE BASIS OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

- ☐ I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared by the Department of City Planning.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures in the discussion have been included as part of the proposed project. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Date: 1/20/01



HILLARY E. GITEMAN
Environmental Review Officer
for
Gerald G. Green
Director of Planning

Appendix B

Wind Tunnel Study

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

TO: **Paul Maltzer**
Acting Environmental Review Officer
Planning Department, Major Environmental Analysis Group
30 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 4150
San Francisco, CA 94102

FROM: **Charles Bennett**
Environmental Science Associates
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA 94104

DATE: **April 17, 2001**

SUBJECT: **Potential Wind Conditions
Proposed 888 Howard Street Project
San Francisco, California
ESA 201198**

I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

A wind-tunnel test was performed for the proposed high-rise hotel and residence building at 888 Howard Street, located on the block bounded by Howard, Fifth, Minna and Fourth Streets, in the City of San Francisco. The test was performed in order to define the pedestrian wind environment that would exist around the proposed project. Pedestrian-level wind speeds were measured at selected points for the site as it presently exists and for the proposed project in the existing setting, to quantify resulting pedestrian-level winds in public spaces near the proposed project.

Details of the background and test methods are presented in Section II, Background. Test results and discussion are presented in Section III, Study Results, and Section IV summarizes the findings and conclusions. An overview of the test results and conclusions follows.

Test 1: Existing Setting

The existing setting consists of all existing buildings, with the Moscone Expansion project (under construction) and the approved Bloomingdales project on Mission Street.

The existing conditions are considered moderately windy; the average wind speed for all 29 test points is less than 11 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more occur at 3 of the 29 locations. Twenty of the 29 locations meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11-mph. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (14 mph) occur at 2 locations on the east sidewalk of Fifth Street, at a location on the west boundary of the project and at the southeast corner of Fifth and Mission Streets, as well as at a point atop the east end of the Fifth and Mission Garage.

The Code's wind hazard criterion is currently not exceeded at any of the 29 tested locations in the site vicinity.

¹ Directions used here refer to local north - south, which aligns with Fifth Street, and local east-west, which aligns with Howard Street. However, all wind directions stated are true compass directions.

Test 2: Project in the Existing Setting

The project scenario consists of the 888 Howard Street project added to the existing setting buildings.

With the project, wind conditions would be considered moderately windy; the average wind speed for all 29 test points would increase by nearly 3/4 mph, to just over 11 mph. Wind speeds in pedestrian areas would range from 7 mph to 20 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more would occur at 7 locations and a wind speed of 18 mph or more would occur at one location. Seventeen of the 29 locations would meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11-mph. The project would eliminate 4 existing exceedances and add 7 new exceedances, while 5 of the existing exceedances would continue.

With the project, as compared to existing conditions, wind speeds would increase at 11 locations, remain unchanged at 6 locations and decrease at 12 locations. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (17 and 20 mph) would occur across Howard Street from the project site and at the southwest corner of the project site, at the intersection of Fifth and Howard Streets.

With the project and its landscape trees along the Fifth Street and Howard Street frontages, the Code's wind hazard criterion would not be exceeded at any of the locations tested.

Project Mitigation Measures

Without the proposed street tree landscaping, the project alone would create one new hazard criterion exceedance at the southwest corner of the site, at the intersection of Fifth and Howard Streets. The duration of the exceedance would be 1 hour. The presences of the landscape trees along the Fifth Street and Howard Street frontages of the project would be sufficient to eliminate this wind hazard criterion exceedance².

Seven new pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances would be caused by the project -- at two points on Howard Street fronting the site, at one point across Howard Street, at the four corners of the intersection of Fifth and Howard, and at a point on the west side of Fifth Street, at Minna Street. Four existing exceedance would be eliminated by the project.

Given the existing wind conditions of the site and vicinity and the changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from a structure the size of the project, it may not be possible to design any structure that fully meets the goals of the project and that fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet Section 148 comfort criteria at all locations.

² Prior wind-tunnel tests for other developments in the vicinity have clearly shown that the placement of mature street trees at spacings of 40 to 50 feet, can fully mitigate a localized 1-hour wind hazard exceedance.

II. BACKGROUND

Tall buildings and structures can strongly affect the wind environment for pedestrians. In cities, groups of structures tend to slow the winds near ground level, due to the friction and drag of the structures themselves. Buildings that are much taller than the surrounding buildings intercept and redirect winds that might otherwise flow overhead, and bring them down the vertical faces of the building to ground level, where they create ground-level wind and turbulence. These redirected winds can be relatively strong and also relatively turbulent, and can be incompatible with the intended uses of nearby ground-level spaces.

The area generally upwind of the project includes many low and mid-rise buildings, but the only other high-rise building nearby will be the Bloomingdales tower. The general openness of the upwind areas allows strong winds to reach the site. Because the structure is in a windy area and because it presents a relatively tall, although not wide, upper structure that can intercept the existing strong west-northwest, west and west-southwest winds, it is possible that the building could contribute to ground-level winds that may prove to be hazardous to pedestrians in the vicinity. Wind-tunnel testing is necessary to determine whether or not unsuitably strong winds would be present after the project is built.

Existing Climate and Wind Conditions

Average winds speeds in San Francisco are the highest in the summer and lowest in winter. However, the strongest peak winds occur in winter. The highest average wind speeds occur in mid-afternoon and the lowest in the early morning. Westerly to northwesterly winds are the most frequent and strongest winds during all seasons. Of the 16 primary wind directions, four have the greatest frequency of occurrence as well as they make up the majority of the strong winds that occur; these are northwest, west-northwest, west and west-southwest winds.

Data describing the speed, direction, and frequency of occurrence of winds were gathered at the old San Francisco Federal Building at 50 United Nations Plaza (at a height of 132 ft.) during the six-year period, 1945 to 1950. Measurements taken hourly and averaged over one-minute periods have been tabulated for each month (averaged over the six years) in three-hour periods using seven classes of wind speed and 16 compass directions. Analysis of these data shows that during the hours from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., about 70% of all winds blow from five of the 16 directions, as follows: Northwest (NW), 10%; West Northwest (WNW), 14%; West (W), 35%; West Southwest (WSW), 2%; Southwest (SW), 9%; and all other winds, 28%. Calm conditions occur 2% of the time. More than 90% of measured winds over 13 mph blow from the NW, WNW, W, WSW, or SW.

Wind Speed and Pedestrian Comfort³

The comfort of pedestrians varies under different conditions of sun exposure, temperature, clothing, and wind speed. Winds up to four miles per hour (mph) have no noticeable effect on pedestrian comfort. With winds from four to eight mph, wind is felt on the face. Winds from eight to thirteen mph will disturb hair, cause clothing to flap, and extend a light flag mounted on a pole. Winds from 13 to 19 mph will raise loose paper, dust and dry soil, and will disarrange hair. For winds from 19 to 26 mph, the force of the wind will be felt on the body. With 26 to 34 mph winds, umbrellas are used with difficulty, hair is blown straight, there is

³ Lawson, T.V. and A.D. Penwarden, "The Effects of Wind on People in the Vicinity of Buildings," Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Wind Effects on Buildings and Structures, London, 1975, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K., 605-622 1976.

difficulty in walking steadily, and wind noise is unpleasant. Winds over 34 mph increase difficulty with balance and gusts can blow people over.

City Planning Code Requirements

This project is located in an area that is subject to the City Planning Code Section 148, Reduction of Ground-Level Wind Currents in C-3 (Downtown Commercial) Districts. However, this analysis is performed using the same wind testing, analysis and evaluation methods that would be used to determine conformity with Section 148 of the Code.

City Planning Code Section 148, Reduction of Ground-Level Wind Currents in C-3 (Downtown Commercial) Districts, requires buildings to be shaped so as not to cause ground-level wind currents to exceed, more than 10% of the time, 11 mph in substantial pedestrian use areas, and 7 mph in public seating areas. Similarly, the Code requires that buildings not cause equivalent wind speeds to reach or exceed the hazard level of 26 mph as averaged for a single full hour of the year, or 0.011416% of the time. These comfort criteria are based on wind speeds that are measured for one minute and averaged. In contrast, the hazard criterion is based on winds that are measured for one hour and averaged; when stated on the same basis as the comfort criteria winds, the hazard criterion speed is a one-minute average of 36 mph⁴. The wind ordinance is defined in terms of equivalent wind speed.⁵ This term denotes an average wind speed (mean velocity), adjusted to include the level of gustiness and turbulence.

Model and Wind Testing Protocols

A 1 inch to 50 foot scale model of the project was constructed in order to simulate the project within its existing and future contexts. The scale model of the project and surrounding area was provided by ESA. The project design used was from plans provided by the project architects - Patri Mercker Architects. The test model was constructed by ESA. The scale models were then tested in a boundary layer wind-tunnel facility at the University of California, Davis, under the direction of Dr. Bruce White. These wind-tunnel tests, however, were performed independent of the University.

The wind-tunnel tests were conducted for two configurations: 1) the Existing Setting and 2) the Project in the Existing Setting. In accordance with the protocol for wind-tunnel testing in Section 148 of the Planning Code, each configuration was wind-tunnel tested for each of four primary wind directions: northwest (NW), west-northwest (WNW), west (W) and west-southwest (WSW). Also, according to the test protocol, project landscaping was excluded from the test model; this is conservative and usually overstates pedestrian wind speeds.

The test procedure consisted of orienting the selected configuration of the model in the boundary layer wind-tunnel and measuring the wind speed at each of the test locations with a hot-wire anemometer. The model was tested in a wind tunnel that allows testing of natural atmospheric boundary layer flow past surface objects such as buildings and other structures. The tunnel has an overall length of 22 meters (m) (72 feet), a test section of 1.22 m (4 feet) wide by 1.83 m (6 feet) high, and an adjustable false ceiling. The adjustable ceiling and turbulence generators allow speeds within the tunnel to vary from 1 meter per second (m/s) to 8 m/s, or 2.2 mph to 17.9 mph.

⁴ Arens, E., "Designing for Acceptable Wind Environment," Transactions Engineering Journal, ASCE 107, No. TE 2, p. 127-141, 1981.

⁵ Equivalent mean wind speed is defined as the mean wind, multiplied by the quantity (one plus three times the turbulence intensity) divided by 1.45.

Wind-speed measurements at each test location were made with a hot-wire anemometer, an instrument that directly relates rates of heat transfer to wind speeds by electronic signals. The hot-wire signals are proportional to the magnitude and steadiness of the wind. The hot-wire probe is calibrated to an accuracy of within 2% before the test procedure is begun. The hot-wire probe measures the analog voltage for approximately 30 seconds at each test location. When converted to digital signals, this measurement provides approximately 30,000 individual voltage samples that are averaged and the root mean square calculated for each test location. These data, when converted to velocity using the calibration curves, provide the mean velocity and turbulence values used to calculate the equivalent wind speed.

By measuring both the mean wind speeds and corresponding turbulence intensities, high wind speeds and gustiness (changes in wind speeds over short periods of time) could be determined. The ratio of near-surface speed to reference wind speed was calculated from the hot-wire measurements. The inherent uncertainty of measurements made with the hot-wire anemometer close to the surface of the model is $\pm 5\%$ of the true values.

These values are compared with the free stream wind as measured in the wind-tunnel. As a result, each wind-tunnel measurement results in a ratio that relates the speed of ground-level wind to the speed at the reference elevation, in this case the height of the Old San Francisco Federal Building. These ratios are the output data from the wind-tunnel tests.

These output data are reduced using a computer program that evaluates the contribution from each tested wind direction to the total wind speed measured at each location for each wind direction. The program first adjusts the wind-tunnel output ratios to account for the differences between the boundary layer profile in the wind-tunnel and the profile as measured at the Old Federal Building located at 50 United Nations Plaza. The program then computes the equivalent wind speed that conforms to the selected criterion, either the wind speed exceeded 10% of the time or the wind speed exceeded one hour or more per year. The program also computes the percentage of time that the wind would exceed the speed criterion selected, and further computes the percentage contribution of each wind direction to the equivalent wind speed and to the excess of the criterion. In addition to the computations for each tested wind direction, the program computes an average ratio and uses this to compute statistics for "Other" winds, which accounts for all remaining wind directions.

The output of the computer program is presented in the Wind-Tunnel Test Results tables for normal winds and for hazardous winds. These tables, appended to this Memorandum, provide the detail of the data and of the intermediate results that are described above.

The wind tunnel ratios were included in the program input, and the results evaluated in the discussions that follow.

Wind Speed Profile Adjustments

The standard Section 148 wind test methodology implicitly assumes that the relationship between height above the ground and wind speed (referred to hereafter as the wind speed profile) is the same in the test area as at the Civic Center weather station. However, wind speed profiles vary from place to place in San Francisco, and the wind speed profiles for the project site differ from those at the Civic Center weather station where data were gathered.

Previous wind-tunnel tests measured the wind speed profiles for NW, WNW, W and WSW winds in the China Basin area. Wind profile adjustment factors were estimated for those wind

directions, based on those profile measurements and upon the methodology presented in the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Handbook, Chapter 14. Based on data from the site's wind speed profiles and previously measured profiles for the Civic Center, the ASHRAE methodology was expanded to create two new categories intermediate to the four presented in Chapter 14. Those categories were assigned for each of the four wind directions at the Old Federal Building meteorological station and for each of the four wind directions at the project site. The assignment provided the values used for alpha and delta, the power-law exponent and the boundary-layer thickness respectively, and ultimately the factors for normalizing that Civic Center meteorological data to the wind speed at the project site. For China Basin sites, WSW wind speeds are reduced by about 27% and W wind speeds by 13%, while NW and WNW wind speeds are reduced by about 3% compared to winds in the Civic Center. The wind speeds reported below, in Section III. Test Cases and Study Results, reflect the use of these adjusted values.

III. TEST CASES AND STUDY RESULTS

Introduction

Twenty-nine test locations were studied for each of the two test scenarios for the four prevailing wind directions: northwest, west-northwest, west, and southwest, that are the most common in San Francisco, and are therefore the most representative for evaluation of the proposed Project.

In general, the test locations focus on locations around the project, and on the sidewalks of Howard, Fifth, Minna and Fourth Streets (see Figure 1).

A total of six points are located immediately adjacent to the project structure, on the sidewalks of Howard Street (#6, 12-14) and Fifth Street (#17), and one (#11) at ground level between the project and the Moscone Expansion project.

Along Howard Street are 16 locations (#1-10, 12-16, 29), with 9 points on the north side (#2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12-14, 16) and 7 points on the south side of the street (#1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 15, 29).

Twelve points (#5, 6, 15-19, 21-25) are located on Fifth Street between Mission and Howard (or Folsom) Streets, with 6 points (#6, 5, 17, 21, 24, 25) on the east side and 6 points (#15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23) on the west.

Four points are on Mission Street, at the intersection of Fifth (#22-25).

Five points (#1, 2, 26, 27, 29) are on Fourth Street sidewalks, between Minna and Howard.

Six points (#18-21, 26, 27) are located along Minna Street from Fifth Street to Fourth Street. One point (#19) is on the north side of the street and 5 points (#18, 20, 21, 26, 27) are on the south side of Minna.

One point (#28) was placed atop the east end of the Fifth and Mission Garage.

A total of four points are on the decks of the low-rise portion of the project (#A, B, C, D). Measurements made at those locations were for the use in design of those areas. Since these points are not in public pedestrian areas, their wind speeds are not discussed here.

Note that these groupings, as well as others used in the discussions of existing conditions and project conditions, include some individual locations in more than one group for discussion purposes.

All hot-wire measurements were taken at the same series of surface points around the project site for all test configurations and wind directions.

For the purpose of identifying the applicable wind comfort criterion of the Code, all of the existing test locations are considered to be pedestrian, rather than sitting areas.

Wind Evaluation and Criteria

Just as the wind-tunnel testing was performed in accordance with the test protocols of City Planning Code Section 148, the performance requirements of Code Section 148 were used to evaluate the results of the tests. The mean wind speeds are compared to the Code's comfort criteria of 11 mph for areas of substantial pedestrian use and 7 mph for seating areas, each not to be exceeded more than 10% of the time. Separate calculations evaluate compliance with the hazard criterion. As previously noted, the wind data observed at the Old San Francisco Federal Building are not full hour average speeds as identified by the Code, so it is necessary to adjust the wind criterion speed to obtain a valid comparison with the available data and the equivalent wind speeds based on those data. When normalized to the equivalent wind speeds used here, the hazard criterion speed is equal to 36 mph, the value used in the tables. Throughout the following discussion the wind speeds reported refer to the equivalent wind speeds that would be exceeded 10% of the time when referring to the comfort criteria, and about 0.011416% of the time when referring to the hazard criterion.

Test Output

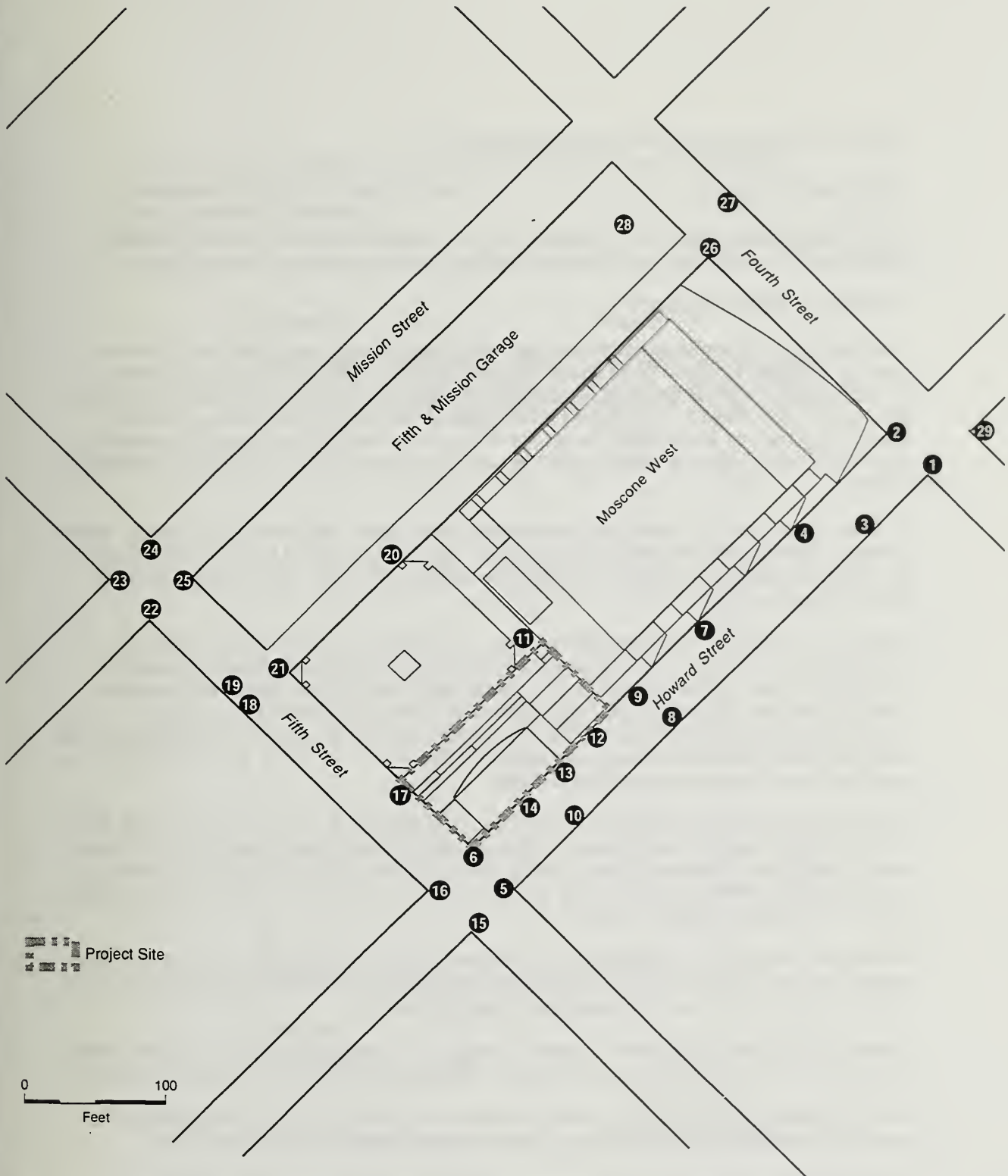
The basic wind-tunnel test data and the detailed outputs of the computer program are presented in tables of comfort criteria and hazard criteria evaluations for each of the scenarios, Setting and Project. These output tables, appended to this Memorandum, provide the detail of the data and the intermediate results described above. The wind-tunnel ratios and the wind profile adjustment factors for each wind direction are included. The results are evaluated in the discussions that follow.

Figure 1 identifies the measurement point locations. Summary information about the wind-tunnel test results and evaluations of compliance with the comfort and hazard criteria are presented for the existing Setting and the Project scenarios in summary tables. The Comfort Analyses results, namely the measured 10% exceeded speed and the percentage of time that the comfort criterion is exceeded for each test location and test scenario, are presented in the one table. The next table presents the Wind Hazard Analyses results, the equivalent wind speed and the number of hours per year of exceedance, if any, of the hazard criterion for each test location and test scenario.

Throughout the following discussion, references are made to values from these two tables. Note that the times in hours and wind speeds in mph presented in those tables are rounded to the nearest integer value. The sums, differences and averages presented also are rounded after calculations that are made using the actual (unrounded) values. As a result, what may appear to be discrepancies in the tabular results are simply due to the rounding of results.

Discussion

Throughout the following discussion the wind speeds reported refer to the equivalent wind speeds that would be exceeded 10% of the time when referring to the Pedestrian Criterion, and winds exceeded 1 hour per year when referring to the Hazard Criterion.



888 Howard Street / 201198 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure B-1
Wind Test Point Locations

TEST 1 - THE EXISTING WIND ENVIRONMENT

The Existing Setting

The existing setting consists of all existing buildings together with the Moscone Expansion project (under construction) and the approved Bloomindaes project on Mission Street.

Comfort Criterion Conditions

The existing wind conditions are moderately windy; the average wind speed for all 29 test points is less than 11 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more occur at 3 locations. Twenty of the 29 locations (#) meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11-mph. See Figure 1 and Table 1. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (14 mph) occur at two points along the east side of Fifth Street, one at the project site (#17) and one at the southeast corner of Fifth and Mission Streets (#24), as well as at a point (#28) atop the Fifth and Mission Garage. .

At the six points (#6, 11-14, 17) on the site block, wind speeds range from 9 to 14 mph. Wind speeds are lowest at the Minna Street access alley (#11). Four (#6, 11, 13, 14) of the six meet the pedestrian comfort criterion. The highest wind speed, 17 mph, occurs at the northwest corner of the site (#17)

Along Howard Street, wind speeds range from 7 to 13 mph, with wind speeds regularly increasing from a 7 mph to 10 mph at three points (#1, 2, 29) at Fourth Street to speeds of 12 mph to 13 mph at three points (#8, 9, 12) mid-block, near the west end of the Moscone West building and one point (#15) on the southwest corner of Fifth and Howard Street. Except at the intersections, wind speeds are generally the same as or up to 3 mph higher on the south side of Howard Street than on the north. Twelve (#1-7, 10, 13, 14, 16, 29) of the 16 locations meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

Wind speeds range from 9 mph to 14 mph at the 12 points (#5, 6, 15-19, 21-25) on Fifth Street between Mission and Howard Streets. At four points at the MS interstecion (#22-25), wind speeds range from 10 mph to 14 mph, while wind speeds range from 10 mph to 12 mph at 4 points at the HS intersection (#5, 6, 15, 16). Seven (#5, 6, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23) of the 12 points meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

Wind speeds range from 13 mph to 14 mph at three (#22, 24, 25) of the 4 points on MS, at its intersection with Fifth (#22-25), while the wind speed at the northwest corner (#23) is 10 mph. Only one point (#23) meets the pedestrian comfort criterion.

Existing wind speeds range from 7 mph to 10 mph at the 5 points (#1, 2, 26, 27, 29) on Fourth Street sidewalks, between Minna and Howard. All five meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

Wind speeds range from 9 mph to 10 mph at the 6 points (#18-21, 26, 27) along Minna Street between Fifth Street and Fourth Street. All six meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

The existing wind speed is 14 mph at one point (#28) atop the east end of the Fifth and Mission Garage. The wind speed there exceeds the pedestrian comfort criterion.

Hazard Conditions

The wind hazard criterion is not exceeded at any of the existing locations. See Table 2.

Table 1 - Wind Comfort Analysis - Existing and Project Conditions⁶
Proposed 888 Howard Street Project⁷
San Francisco, California
Wind-Tunnel Test, April, 2001

References		Existing			Project			
Location Number	Comfort Criterion Speed (mph)	Equivalent Wind Speed (mph) Exceeded 10% of Time	Percent of Time Wind Speed Exceeds Criterion	<i>e</i> <i>xc</i> <i>e</i> <i>d</i> <i>s</i>	Equivalent Wind Speed (mph) Exceeded 10% of Time	Percent of Time Wind Speed Exceeds Criterion	Speed Change Relative to Existing (mph)	<i>e</i> <i>xc</i> <i>e</i> <i>d</i> <i>s</i>
1	11	8	1		7	1	-1	
2	11	7	0		7	1		
3	11	10	4		10	7		
4	11	8	1		9	6	1	
5	11	10	6		15	24	5	+
6	11	11	9		20	42	9	+
7	11	9	2		8	2	-1	
8	11	12	12	<i>e</i>	11	11		-
9	11	13	17	<i>e</i>	9	3	-5	-
10	11	11	9		17	33	6	+
11	11	9	4		9	3		
12	11	12	13	<i>e</i>	11	10	-1	-
13	11	11	11		13	17	2	+
14	11	11	11		15	21	3	+
15	11	12	12	<i>e</i>	14	19	2	<i>e</i>
16	11	9	4		14	19	5	+
17	11	14	22	<i>e</i>	11	11	-3	-
18	11	10	8		12	14	2	+
19	11	9	6		9	5		
20	11	10	6		9	3	-1	
21	11	9	4		11	10	2	
22	11	13	19	<i>e</i>	12	12	-2	<i>e</i>
23	11	10	8		10	7	-1	
24	11	14	21	<i>e</i>	13	17	-1	<i>e</i>
25	11	13	17	<i>e</i>	12	13	-1	<i>e</i>
26	11	10	6		11	12	1	
27	11	9	5		8	3	-1	
28	11	14	20	<i>e</i>	14	19		<i>e</i>
29	11	10	8		9	6	-1	
Average mph / %		10.6	9%		11.3	12%	0.7	
Exceedances:		Total	9		Total	12		
Counts:		Existing	9	<i>e</i>	Existing Exceedance	5		<i>e</i>
					New, Due to Project	7		+
					New, at new Location	0		#
					Exceedance Eliminated	4		-

⁶ Wind speeds and durations are rounded, so column totals and row differences may not add. See Section II, Test Output.

⁷ Test models did not include proposed project landscape trees, which would reduce the wind speeds measured at locations #6, 12, 13, 14, and 17 by 1 mph to 2 mph. See the discussion.

Table 2 - Wind Hazard Analysis - Existing and Project Conditions⁸
Proposed 888 Howard Street Project⁹
San Francisco, California
Wind-Tunnel Test, April 2001

References		Existing			Project			
Location Number	Wind Hazard Criterion Speed (mph)	Equivalent Wind Speed Exceeded 1 hour/year (mph)	Hours per year Wind Speed Exceeds Hazard Criterion	e	Equivalent Wind Speed Exceeded 1 hour/year (mph)	Hours per year Wind Speed Exceeds Hazard Criterion	Hours Change Relative to Setting	e
1	36	16			16			
2	36	14			15			
3	36	18			21			
4	36	15			21			
5	36	17			27			
6	36	22			36	1	1	+
7	36	18			19			
8	36	24			22			
9	36	27			23			
10	36	20			32			
11	36	17			15			
12	36	21			25			
13	36	20			26			
14	36	19			28			
15	36	21			29			
16	36	18			31			
17	36	28			22			
18	36	22			21			
19	36	20			20			
20	36	17			20			
21	36	16			19			
22	36	26			22			
23	36	22			23			
24	36	29			28			
25	36	27			27			
26	36	17			20			
27	36	19			17			
28	36	33			31			
29	36	22			24			
Average mph / hr		20.9	0		23.4	1	1.0	
Exceedances:		Total	0		Total	1		
Counts:		Existing	0	e	Existing Exceedance	0		e
					New, Due to Project	1		+
					New, at new Location	0		#
					Exceedance Eliminated	0		-

⁸ Wind speeds and durations are rounded, so column totals and row differences may not add. See Section II, Test Output.

⁹ Test models did not include proposed project landscape trees, which would eliminate the hazard exceedance at location #6 and reduce the wind speeds measured at locations #6, 12, 13, 14, and 17 by 1 mph to 2 mph.

TEST 2 - PROJECT WIND IMPACTS

Project in the Existing Setting

The project setting consists of the 888 Howard Street project model, developed from plans provided by the project architects, Patri Mercker Architects, and added to the existing setting for the test.

Comfort Criterion Conditions

With the project, wind conditions would be considered moderately windy; the average wind speed for all 18 test points would increase by nearly 3/4 mph, to just over 11 mph. Wind speeds in pedestrian areas would range from 7 mph to 20 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more would occur at 7 locations (#5, 6, 10, 15, 16, 28) and a wind speed of 18 mph or more would occur at one location (#6). Seventeen of the 29 locations would meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11-mph. The project would eliminate 4 existing exceedances (#8, 9, 12, 17) and add 7 new exceedances (#5, 6, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18), while 5 of the existing exceedances (#15, 22, 24, 25, 28) would continue.

With the project, as compared to existing conditions, wind speeds would increase at 11 locations (#4-6, 10, 13-16, 18, 21, 26), remain unchanged at 6 locations (#2, 3, 8, 11, 19, 28) and decrease at 12 locations (#1, 7, 9, 12, 17, 20, 22-25, 27, 29). The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (17 and 20 mph) would occur across Howard Street from the project site (#10) and at the southwest corner of the project site (#6), at the intersection of Fifth and Howard Streets. Seventeen of the 29 locations (#1-4, 7-9, 11, 12, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 29), three fewer than under the existing conditions, would meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11-mph. See Figure 1 and Table 1.

At the six points (#6, 11-14, 17) on the site block, wind speeds would range from 9 to 20 mph. Wind speeds would be lowest at the Minna Street access alley (#11) and in front of the garage entrances. mid-block on Fifth (#17) and on Howard Streets (#12). Three (#11, 12, 17) would meet the pedestrian comfort criterion. The highest wind speed, 20 mph, would occur at the southwest corner of the site (#6)

Along Howard Street, wind speeds with the project would range from 7 to 20 mph, with wind speeds of 7 mph to 9 mph at three points (#1, 2, 29) at Fourth Street regularly increasing to speeds of 14 mph to 20 mph at four points (#5, 6, 15, 16) at Fifth Street. Except at the intersections, wind speeds generally would be 1 mph to 3 mph higher on the south side of Howard Street than on the north. Five locations (#2, 4, 7, 9, 12) on the north side of HS and four locations (#1, 3, 8, 29) on the south side of HS would meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

Wind speeds would range from 9 mph to 20 mph at the 12 points (#5, 6, 15-19, 21-25) on Fifth Street between Mission and Howard Streets. At the four points at the MS intersection (#22-25), wind speeds would decrease by as much as 2 mph to range from 10 mph to 13 mph. In contrast, wind speeds would increase by 2 mph to 9 mph to reach 14 mph to 20 mph at 4 points at the HS intersection (#5, 6, 15, 16). Four (#17, 19, 21, 23) of the 12 points would meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

With the project, wind speeds generally would decrease to range from 10 mph to 13 mph at the 4 points (#22-24) on MS, at its intersection with Fifth, while the wind speed at the northwest corner (#23) would remain at 10 mph. Only one point (#23) would meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

With the project, changes of ± 1 mph would occur and wind speeds would range from 7 mph to 11 mph at the 5 points (#1, 2, 26, 27, 29) on Fourth Street sidewalks, between Minna and Howard. All five would continue to meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

With the project changes ranging from -1 mph to +2 mph would occur, and wind speeds would range from 8 mph to 12 mph at the 6 points (#18-21, 26, 27) along Minna Street between Fifth Street and Fourth Street. Of the six, all but one (#18) would continue to meet the pedestrian comfort criterion.

With the project, the wind speed at one point (#28) atop the east end of the Fifth and Mission Garage would remain unchanged at 14 mph and exceed the pedestrian comfort criterion.

Hazard Conditions

Without the presence of the proposed street tree landscaping, but with the project, the wind hazard criterion of the Code would be exceeded at the southwest corner of the project site, on the sidewalk at the intersection of Fifth and Howard Streets, for a duration of 1 hour per year. With the proposed landscape trees, the hazard criterion would not be exceeded¹⁰.

Project Wind Mitigation Measures

Discussion

Under Section 148 of the City Planning Code, new buildings and additions to buildings may not cause ground-level winds to exceed the wind comfort criteria values more than ten percent of the time year round between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. If existing wind speeds exceed the comfort level, new buildings and additions must be designed to reduce ambient wind speeds to meet the requirements. Section 148 also establishes a hazard criterion, which is a 26 mph hourly-average equivalent wind speed for a single full hour. Buildings may not cause winds that meet or exceed this criterion.

Siting of large structures is expected to change wind flows, speeding up the wind at some locations and slowing it elsewhere in the vicinity. Experience indicates that it is common for buildings to eliminate some existing exceedances and create others. In practice it is not always possible to mitigate remaining exceedances (as required by the Planning Code).

In this case, 9 pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances occur under the Existing Setting. The project would eliminate 4 existing pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances and create 7 new pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances, for a new total of 12 exceedances. The project, without the landscaping street trees, would create a new hazard criterion exceedance.

Mitigation Measures

The addition of large street trees as proposed along the sidewalks of Fifth and Howard Streets in front of the project would reduce wind speeds by 1 to 2 mph at the 5 points along those two frontages (#6, 12-14, 17). This would not be sufficient to eliminate the 2 new exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion that would occur at points #6 and 14, however it should be sufficient to eliminate the new pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance at point #13. Further, with the proposed landscaping trees along the sidewalks, no new hazard criterion exceedance would be caused by the project.

¹⁰ Prior wind-tunnel tests for other developments in the vicinity have clearly shown that the placement of mature street trees at spacings of 40 to 50 feet, can fully mitigate a localized 1-hour wind hazard exceedance.

IV. SUMMARY

General Conditions and Comfort Criteria

The existing wind conditions are considered windy; the average wind speed for all 29 test points is slightly less than 11 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more occur at 4 locations. Twenty of the 29 locations presently meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11-mph. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (14 mph) occur at two points along the east side of Fifth Street, one at the project site and one at the southeast corner of Fifth and Mission Streets, as well as at a point atop the Fifth and Mission Garage.

With the project, as compared to existing conditions, wind speeds would increase at 11 locations, remain unchanged at 6 locations and decrease at 12 locations. The average wind speed for all 29 test points would increase, but would remain just above 11 mph.

With the project, wind speeds in pedestrian areas would range from 7 mph to 20 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more would occur at 7 locations. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (17 and 20 mph) would occur across Howard Street from the project site and at the southwest corner of the project site, at the intersection of Fifth and Howard Streets.

Seventeen of the 29 locations, three fewer than under existing conditions, would meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11-mph. The project would eliminate 4 existing exceedances of the pedestrian comfort criterion and add 7 new exceedances while 5 of the existing exceedances would continue.

Wind Hazard Conditions

The Code's wind hazard criterion is not currently exceeded at any of the 29 test locations, although prior testing indicates that wind hazard exceedances should be expected in the vicinity. With the project and landscaping, the Code's wind hazard criterion would not be exceeded at any of the same locations..

Project Mitigation Measures

A net of three new pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances would be caused by the Project. The proposed addition of the large street trees along the sidewalks would reduce wind speeds that would occur in pedestrian areas, however this landscaping would not necessarily provide sufficient wind speed reductions to eliminate the new and existing exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

As proposed, the project would not create a new hazard criterion exceedance.

Given the existing windy conditions of the site and vicinity and the modest changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from the project, it may not be possible to design any structure that fully meets the goals of the project and that fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet Section 148 comfort criteria at all locations.

Appendix C

Intersection Level of Service Designations

APPENDIX C

INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE DESIGNATIONS

Existing and future traffic conditions at signalized intersections within the primary study area have been evaluated using the TRAF-NETSIM Traffic Simulation Model. Conditions at signalized intersections in the secondary study area have been evaluated using the *1985 Highway Capacity Manual* (Transportation Research Board, 1985) operations methodology. Both methodologies use the concept of Level of Service (LOS), which, for signalized intersections, is defined in terms of delay, or waiting time at a signal. Delay is a measure of driver discomfort, frustration, fuel consumption, and lost travel time. Intersection LOS, determined according to the vehicle delay in seconds per vehicle, range from LOS A (very low delay) to LOS F (forced flow). Table C-1 (page A.46) provides more detailed descriptions of the six LOS, A through F, for signalized intersections using the *1985 Highway Capacity Manual* method. The TRAF-NETSIM simulation calculates LOS in much the same way, with similar results, but refines the analysis based on signal progression along streets, such as the Embarcadero, and based on spill-back, when queues from one intersection extend back to a previous intersection.

In the past, for planning applications, the City of San Francisco has used a slightly different methodology than the TRAF-NETSIM or *1985 Highway Capacity Manual* to analyze operations at signalized intersections. That method, known as the *Critical Lane Analysis* (Transportation Research Circular Number 212, Transportation Research Board, 1980), determines the ratio of critical opposing traffic volumes to theoretical intersection capacity, yielding the volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio. Intersection LOS, determined according to the value of the v/c ratio, range from LOS A (free flowing condition) to LOS F (severely congested conditions). Table C-2 (page A.47) provides more detailed descriptions of the six LOS, A through F, for signalized intersections using the *Critical Lane Analysis* methodology.

TABLE C-1
SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS BASED ON DELAY

LEVEL OF SERVICE	TYPICAL DELAY (SEC/VEH)	TYPICAL TRAFFIC CONDITION
A	≤ 5.0	Insignificant Delays: No approach phase is fully utilized and no vehicle waits longer than one red indication.
B	5.1 - 15.0	Minimal Delays: an occasional approach phase is fully utilized. Drivers begin to feel restricted.
C	15.1 - 25.0	Acceptable Delays: Major approach phase may become fully utilized. Most drivers feel somewhat restricted.
D	25.1 - 40.0	Tolerable Delays: Drivers may wait through more than one red indication. Queues may develop but dissipate rapidly, without excessive delays.
E	40.1 - 60.0	Significant Delays: Conditions are generally the limit of acceptable delays. Vehicles may wait through several signal cycles and long queues of vehicles from upstream.
F	> 60.0	Excessive Delays: Represents unacceptable conditions with extremely long delays. Queues may block upstream intersections.

Sources: *Highway Capacity Manual*, Highway Research Board, Special Report No. 209, Washington, D.C., 1985; *Interim Materials on Highway Capacity*, Circular 212, Transportation Research Board, 1980; Kolve Engineering.

TABLE C-2
ARTERIAL LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS BASED ON TRAVEL SPEED

ARTERIAL CLASS	I	II	III
RANGE OF FREE FLOW SPEEDS (mph)	45 to 35	35 to 30	35 to 25
TYPICAL FREE FLOW SPEED (mph)	40	35	27
LEVEL OF SERVICE	AVERAGE TRAVEL SPEED (mph)		
A	≥ 35	≥ 30	≥ 25
B	≥ 28	≥ 24	≥ 19
C	≥ 22	≥ 18	≥ 13
D	≥ 17	≥ 14	≥ 9
E	≥ 13	≥ 10	≥ 7
F	< 13	< 10	< 7

- Level of Service A: Primarily free-flow operations at average travel speeds, usually about 90 percent of the free flow speed for the arterial class. Vehicles are completely unimpeded in their ability to maneuver within the traffic stream. Stopped delay at signalized intersections is minimal.
- Level of Service B: Reasonably unimpeded operations at average travel speeds, usually about 70 percent of the free flow speed for the arterial class. The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is only slightly restricted and stopped delays are not bothersome. Drivers are not generally subjected to appreciable tension.
- Level of Service C: Stable operations. However, ability to maneuver and change lanes in mid-block locations may be more restricted than in LOS B, and longer queues and/or adverse signal coordination may contribute to lower average travel speeds of about 50 percent of the average free flow speed for the arterial class. Motorists will experience an appreciable tension while driving.
- Level of Service D: Borders on a range on which small increases in flow may cause substantial increases in approach delay and, hence, decreases in arterial speed. This may be due to adverse signal progression, inappropriate signal timing, high volumes, or some combination of these. Average travel speeds are about 40 percent of free flow speed.
- Level of Service E: Significant approach delays and average travel speeds of one-third the free flow speed or lower. Such operations are caused by some combination of adverse progression, high signal density, extensive queuing at critical intersections, and inappropriate signal timing.
- Level of Service F: Extremely low speeds below one-third to one-quarter of the free flow speed. Intersection congestion is likely at critical signalized locations, with high approach delays resulting. Adverse progression is frequently a contributor to this condition.

Source: Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, Transportation Research Board, 1980.

Although the two methodologies for calculating the LOS differ, there is usually a good correlation between the LOS calculated using either method of analysis. It is only when high levels of congestion occur that differences between the two methodologies may be more apparent. As an example, using the *1985 Highway Capacity Manual* methodology, an intersection may be operating at a LOS F, with poor traffic progression, many signal cycle failures and vehicle delays above 60 seconds per vehicle; however, the v/c ratio could be below one, which would mean a LOS E using the *Critical Lane Analysis* methodology. Conversely, using the *1985 Highway Capacity Manual* methodology, an intersection may be operating at LOS D, with an efficient signal progression handling large traffic volumes; however, the v/c ratio could be above 0.9, which would mean a LOS E using the *Critical Lane Analysis* methodology.

Appendix D

San Francisco Air Pollutant Summary

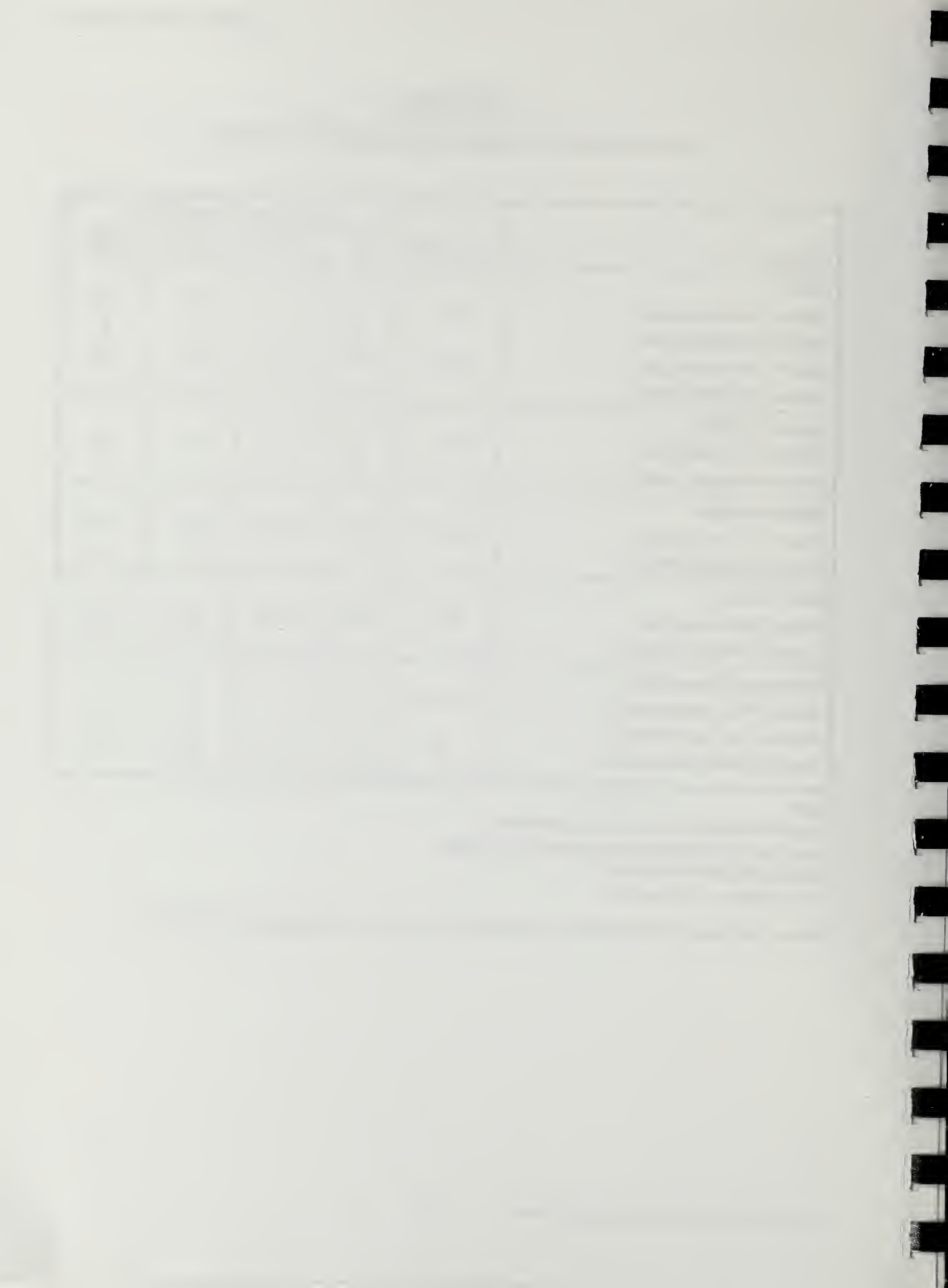
APPENDIX D

SAN FRANCISCO AIR POLLUTANT SUMMARY, 1997-2000

Pollutant	Standard	Monitoring Data by Year ¹			
		1997	1998	1999	2000
Ozone					
Highest 1-hr average, ppm	0.09 ³	0.07	0.05	0.08	0.06
Number of standard excesses		0	0	0	0
Highest 8-hr average, ppm	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.04
Number of standard excesses		0	0	0	0
Carbon Monoxide					
Highest 8-hr average, ppm	9.0 ³	3.5	4.0	3.7	2.5
Number of standard excesses		0	0	0	0
Nitrogen Dioxide					
Highest 1-hr average, ppm	0.25 ³	0.07	0.08	0.10	0.07
Number of standard excesses		0	0	0	0
Sulfur Dioxide					
Highest 1-hr average, ppm	0.05 ⁴	0.003	0.005	0.007	0.006
Number of standard excesses		0	0	0	0
Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)					
Highest 24-hr average, µg/m ³	50 ³	81	52	78	53
Number of standard excesses		3	1	6	13
Annual Geometric Mean, µg/m ³	30 ³	22.5	20.2	22.6	20.7

Notes:¹ All data were collected at the Arkansas Street Station.² ppm = parts per million; µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter.³ State standard, not to be exceeded.⁴ State standard, not to be exceeded.

Source: California Air Resources Board, Aerometric Data Analysis & Management (ADAM), 2001.



Appendix E

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